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NO. 10

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THE 'MODERN STATE' IN AFRICA AND ASIA¹

ROBERT MONTAGNE

OWING to an extraordinary attack of bashfulness in the more ancient cultures, colonization (the great historical process which largely explains the spread of humanity over the face of the earth as well as the diffusion of civilizations) is now so discredited that we hardly dare call it by its name. It is well known, however, that even before men discovered how to immortalize their deeds in writing, intrepid sailors, taking with them their families, had set out from India and Indonesia in flimsy vessels, and went to conquer the islands of the Pacific and the continents of Africa and America. The Romans themselves, in the Mediterranean, following the Phoenicians and the Greeks, unified their empire (which then comprised nearly the whole known world) by making use of the sea. Ten centuries later began the expansion of Europe which reached its utmost limits twenty years ago with the dominion of nearly the whole world. Epochs of new adventure are near at hand, when fleets of aeroplanes, manufactured mostly in America, will reach in one day the farthest and most inaccessible corners of the world, and convey men carrying all they need to sustain life.

This maritime and aerial expansion is now to be added to that other tremendous historical phenomenon: territorial expansion achieved over many centuries of immense effort by peoples always on the move. To confine ourselves to the example of Africa, the Berbers, at the dawn of our civilization, began in this manner to engulf the territories between the Mediterranean and the Tropics, to subdue the older Mediterranean peoples who had preceded them, and often to annihilate the negro settlers. Later, the Arabs too, first through their warriors and scholars and then through the nomadic pastoral tribes such as the Beni Hilal and the Maqil, tried to unify the vast territory between the Persian Gulf and the Atlantic. And other architects of empire — Turks, French, Italians, English — came to this same area and established themselves there.

These territorial and maritime conquests were recorded and celebrated by the people who undertook them. They also gave rise among the conquered — conquerors of yesterday — to resentments which still smoulder. Today, when the world has become smaller, when men and ideas travel with increasing ease, when all tongues are

¹ An inaugural lecture delivered by Professor Montagne in the Collège de France on December 1st, 1948. It appeared originally in *L'Afrique et L'Asie*, Paris, 1949; and is here translated by Elie and Sylvia Kedourie.

mingled and rival political ideas confront each other, the memories of these great expansions are still alive in international assemblies. It is indeed easy to understand that the imperial powers should try to save what remains of their achievements. The inhabitants of the colonies of yesterday, now set up as 'modern states' — a bold Western innovation — relentlessly demand their place in the sun. The representatives of the old nations are confronted by those of the new, whether in U.N.O. or in its Committees, and are concerned to found a new international law of a *static character* which would forever erase the memory, as yet all too near, of these great historic expansions. Conquerors and conquered are to be seen there, wearing the same clothes, obeying the same diplomatic conventions, appealing to the authority of the same modern constitutions. Watching and listening to them, one could easily come to the conclusion that a modern world, stable and united, is already in existence and that colonization had been merely an unfortunate and passing phase. But what is the reality like? What are these modern states which rise up on the ruins of the old empires? Is the world, which is now changing so fast, giving birth to entirely new societies? Or is it that what we see are only ephemeral structures, mere juristic phantoms, which only hide from us the obstinate survival of ancient ways of life able to resist indefinitely the influence of the West? This can be found out only by studying the structure of these new nations and states.

A generation ago, students whose concern was to understand the different human communities, relied, above all else, on the help of history. During long scholarly lives, they used to go back to the very remotest origins, to decipher inscriptions and texts, establish the order of succession of dynasties and conquests, and to take into consideration alien influences. The politicians followed the scholars, made use of their labours and tried to find in them arguments to support action. History was made to justify the desire for conquest, and became an epic to the glory of the 'white man'; although it is true that other white men sometimes made themselves the opponents of expansion, interpreted in a contrary sense the results of scholarship and predicted the emancipation of the peoples. Today, we note a new tendency in the field of historical studies. There is scarcely a nation or a tribe in Africa, Asia or America that does not strive to find in the archaeological remains of its own territory, or in the works left by its own writers, the undeniable evidence which would justify its claim to a civilization all its own. Each readily proclaims that, before being conquered, it was the seat of profound political, religious or even scientific wisdom; this, it maintains, surpasses the wisdom which, only yesterday, we were so proud to offer.

These different and contradictory assertions have somewhat discredited the exclusive use of an historical method in our field of interest. Moreover, historical syntheses, so difficult to build up, often appear debatable and tainted with prejudice. In order to come to some conclusion, we now feel the need of more summary methods of classification and analysis.

Thanks to the geographers, on the one hand, spaces which used to be marked white on our maps — *terrae incognitae* — hold no more secrets for us. On the other, the lack of historical archives, deficient as they often are, incomplete or suspect, is remedied by the existence of numerous monographs dealing with the customs and laws of various peoples spread over many territories. These monographs allow us to establish a great number of comparisons which prove fertile in results. In the vast, more or less completely unified zones which we call the 'Arab world', the 'Negro world', the 'world of Islam', worlds which are no longer abstractions for us, we see clearly that in social life similar causes have had similar effects. During past centuries kingdoms and empires subject to the same influences, grew up in these places. What remains of these kingdoms and empires today suffers in common the impact of the West.

Events and institutions can thus, according to a comparative method which is no longer strictly historical, be classified in a series. Without having to admit that humanity always passes through the same stages in its history, we can see in certain regions the existence, at different epochs, of identical social structures and of similar developments. Thus, a well conducted study of the tribes of Arabia of the present day makes us understand better what the life of the Israelites was in earlier times. The role of Abd El Krim explains the history of Almohads. The crises which we observe today in the East are a presage of what will happen in the Maghreb tomorrow. In this manner we accustom ourselves to move in thought not only through time but also through the 'time-space', which is an often reversible complex, inside which past and present, East and West, no longer stand in opposition.

In order to measure this time-space, and at the risk of shocking the historians, I propose to take in thought a fast aeroplane. This is the only practical way which will allow us to survey in a bird's-eye view the far-reaching frontiers of our subject. In this way, also, we shall feel that beneficent shock produced on the mind by the impressions afforded by a variety of stopping-places, impressions which will sharpen by their contrast our analytic abilities.

Not that the modern plane, improved and adapted for long journeys, is as good as that of thirty years ago, which allowed us to observe inhabited lands as easily as a migrating bird can discern them in its flight. Airliners have become big transports, completely

shut in on themselves, with almost opaque portholes. Even the traveller with a practised eye can hardly distinguish, through the thick panes, the gradually changing face of the earth. Travelling from North to South, he would see, after the desert, the first bushes, then the grasslands and the tropical and equatorial forest. How St Exupéry used to be charmed by such a progress, almost interplanetary, and its precious lesson in geography. The works of man, however, are almost impossible to discern. We become aware of them only when we spot a Beduin who has lit a fire of brushwood at the entrance of his tent, the glow of which will seem to us like a little red star; or perhaps when we see, in the glare of the midday sun, the reflection of the tens of thousands of corrugated iron roofs in one of those large cities, in the depth of the Sudan, hitherto unknown to us.

The earth glides away too fast underneath us. We must concentrate on the map in order to discover approximately where we are. And the map will be the pretext of a meditation as deep as it is fruitful, while the plane indifferently cuts through the frontiers of the various states which we see on the multicoloured sheet.

If we are travelling in America, Africa or the Near East, the invisible frontiers over which we are flying will have, nearly all of them, a common feature which is of great importance. A great many of these frontiers are geometrical lines: parallels, meridians or obliques. These are abstract and theoretical divisions which contrast with the supple lines — mountain ranges or valleys — within which most of the states of Europe and Asia, having developed throughout their long history. These straight lines are the marks that the white man's hand has left while forming, *ab nihilo*, these 'modern states' which we are soon to inspect. These lines are those with which an arrogant pen, at a meeting of experts, has imperiously fixed the lives of the coloured peoples, by drawing on the map on a diplomat's table the contours of a new society.

If we had been crossing North America in a single flight, we would have noticed on the map a division even more uncompromising in its straight lines. The 'States' of the Union, the Provinces of Canada, would have seemed to us, from the sky, like some kind of gigantic allotments from which the Indian tribes, forced back into the reserves, have been excluded. They seem to have served as a frame to make possible the planting of the 'colonists' from Europe. A hundred years of effort have been enough to give life to these abstractions. What a contrast to our old states in Europe and in Asia, the formation of which, within natural geographical limits, is the fruit of a millenium of development! The provinces which form these states were themselves at one time small kingdoms with frontiers dating from remote history; their lands were slowly appropriated

by men born in the country and consolidation was the patient work of dynasties of rulers triumphing over intractable resistance.

But let us confine ourselves to Africa and the Near East, regions where the expansion of the West is still going on in various ways. All over these regions the existence of frontiers in straight lines serves to remind us that the era of zones of influence apportioned among rival nations and of the scientific division of continents is hardly ended. Let us examine these frontiers carefully.

Sometimes, the straight lines start at a given point from which a number of frontiers diverge fanwise. If this abstract network covers inhabited areas, then there will be convenient nests for smugglers who, passing successively from one compartment into the other, will make their profits out of the impotence of the customs and the financial controls. The corner of eastern Morocco squeezed in between Algeria and the Spanish Rif is such a region, another is the *bec de canard* in Syria, between Turkey and Iraq . . . Often also, when the theoretical dividing line is drawn through densely populated regions, it breaks so many ties among men that, in practice, it proves necessary for Frontier Delimitation Commissions to make concessions to topography. We then get those saw-like frontiers, purely theoretical straight lines to start with, later made a little more human; such frontiers are those which separate the Cameroons from Togoland, under French and British trusteeship. Yet, in spite of these rearrangements, the cries of the victims are still heard. The Ewes of Togoland, for instance, last year denounced through U.N.O., the arbitrary division imposed on them, a division which they described as a kind of vivisection. It is true that their protest may not have been altogether spontaneous, and that it was meant to provoke the intervention of the Trusteeship Committee in the question of the division of Africa between the European nations.

There are also still more ingenious frontiers which have resulted in even more complicated geometrical figures. I am thinking of those curious polygons drawn by British political officers to form the neutral zones in the desert claimed by Saudi Arabia on the one hand, Iraq and Kuwait on the other. Even though here also it is a question of linear frontiers, we see a touching effort on the part of Westerners to recognize the rightness of the native conception of political geography, which is so different from ours. Before our arrival in Asia and Africa, a frontier was never actually a line but a no-man's-land, where one ventured only at one's own risk. In Black Africa today, wise administrators, by making use of this concept, have established in small neutral zones, without injury to the interests of any party, schools, missions, experimental farms and nurseries. For this, they chose these no-man's-lands which have always existed between the various hitherto hostile chieftainships. There is no end

to the curious fancies of 'scientific frontiers', drawn by the geographers and the diplomats of the West. One has only to think of the Spanish Sahara cut up into three zones separated by parallel lines, each of which has a separate status. But the nomadic camel breeders, heedless of the Europeans, are always crossing these zones, in search of the fickle pastures conjured up by the rain. Or better still, there is the last-born of these partitions, the Palestinian checkerboard, cut up into six squares, each three joined together at their extremities, in order to separate Jew from Arab.

And yet, what powerful reality those lines drawn on the map possess, lines which neither nature nor the inhabitants, left to themselves, would have brought into being. The West is there, in these invisible frames which it has drawn on its own maps, come to undertake its gigantic task. To be made aware of this, it is enough for us to examine our surroundings during the first stop of the plane on one of the landing grounds near a large African town — Kano, for example. What strikes us near the rest house where the passengers are received is the variety of the races around us. In this vast continent (yesterday a sea of peoples on the move, throwing up disparate invasions following one on the other) the Western peace, at the end of the nineteenth century, suddenly came to freeze these human waves. The positions of the conquering races, and of innumerable small surviving islands of conquered peoples which have taken refuge in the mountains and become shut in on themselves, are everywhere to be seen. Hundreds of different tongues, thousands of dialects have kept these human groupings apart from one another; the different physical characteristics of those whom we see around us are enough to testify to the far-reaching antiquity and of the isolation of these small communities so jealously guarded for many centuries. And suddenly, on those advancing waves, on those scattered islands, a Western power has thrown its net to catch these heterogeneous societies, like fish which, caught in the trap, cease at last to devour each other. But in spite of the diversity of ethnic types, we will hear only one language spoken, a language imposed on all by the conquering colonial power, which has also imposed its currency and its exchange controls. Its customs authorities too are here to levy (after a long and suspicious inspection that no smile can pacify) various duties on the goods brought in, no matter how insignificant. And here also are the police, and the native army. Even though we are in the heart of Africa, we are left in no doubt that here is a modern state set in the midst of other modern states, run and administered in the same way. The elected representatives of the neighbouring countries, the *conseillers généraux*, the M.P.s, the Councillors of the Republic and of the French Union all sit at the table in this rest house. In the English-language newspapers on the

table, we read that the local parliament, the House of Assembly, has just held its annual session and begun its work with a prayer modelled on that read at Westminster . . . The Cadi of the Emirate where we have stopped gives judgment underneath the portrait of King George VI, as a judge in England would do. . . .

These things which we observe now in Africa, no matter how curious they may be, are not new. The introduction by conquerors of Western institutions is quite the rule. When Portugal was imposing its authority on the delta of the Congo, in the sixteenth century, the African kings used to receive coats of arms from Lisbon and codes of laws compiled by Christian lawyers, and their vassals used to become marquesses and counts . . . And this went on until some revolt would re-establish the African order and expel the missionaries.

Let us not think, however, that this is a question of mere appearances. The extremely powerful machinery of the modern state (which establishes itself with its numerous adjuncts, financial, economic, judicial and cultural) will somehow exercise from the outside, on the innumerable native societies, imprisoned henceforth within their 'scientific' frontiers, a pressure of such power and efficiency, that it breaks them up and scatters them like the shell of a cracked nut.

But it is time for us to leave our plane and to venture into the towns, into the bled or the bush, through the Sahel or the steppe and right into the jungle in order to witness the amazing social transformation at the end of which the unity of the world (through the similarity of modern institutions everywhere) will, we think, be realized.

Within the limits laid down by conquest or the mutual rivalries of the Powers, the West has established the modern state. This State is immediately supplied with all the techniques essential to it: those of finance, economics, justice, education, and defence. It is moreover given, in fact or in law, a constitution which regulates the relations of the state authorities with the local populations.

Often, especially at the beginning, paradoxical as it is, a kind of systematic and temporary consolidation of the previous political institutions takes place. This is really because the conqueror is under the necessity of husbanding his available forces, unavoidably limited, in order to direct and control the life of the people. Sometimes the new masters, hesitating to demolish at one stroke an often ancient civilization, manifest a desire to keep intact the respectable elements of social life which sustain it. The treaties of Great Britain with the Indian princes, the Demischel treaty with Emir Abd el Kader, the protectorate conventions in Morocco and Tunisia, the treaties signed with the Foulbé Emirs in the middle Niger, the

recognition of the Negro chiefs from the time of the Congo kings of the sixteenth century down to the chieftains of the Rwanda-Urundi in the twentieth century — such are the different manifestations of this state of mind. But, however resolved the new masters may be to observe these treaties scrupulously, the stabilization of these native sovereignties soon confronts them with problems difficult to solve. The arbitrariness of the rulers was tempered in the past by the fear of war and rebellion; the support of the notables was therefore essential to enable the rulers to govern the people. But from now onwards, in this modern state rigorously pacified, their domination runs no more risks. They are naturally tempted to exercise it without any check. The old abuses speedily reappear, multiplied at all the steps of the hierarchy, with nothing to stand in their way. The tyranny of the great, the degradation of the masses go on increasing, unless a vigilant supervision succeeds in re-establishing justice for a short while, as it does, but alas, only too infrequently. Absolutism sets itself up in the shape of democratic doctrine. This is to be noticed in Africa and in Asia wherever the power of the native ruler exceeds the influence of the Western Adviser whose duty it is to check the evil. The reaction will then be swift. The will of the conqueror suppresses such extensive sovereignties as those of the big chiefs in the Algerian South, of the Emirs of Mauritania, of the King of Abeokuta in Nigeria and of so many others. . . .

At the same time, notables from the civil service or the merchant class will reap fortunes for themselves by making use of modern economic methods, in a society where the weak can no longer have recourse to rebellion. They increase their landed properties and often use improved techniques on them. This is what happens in Iraq, in Egypt, in Morocco, under conditions which sometimes endanger the social equilibrium of the rural populations and paralyse the settlement of the nomads.

But what we see most of all is a rapid decline of the basic institutions and social units which takes place in the course of only two or three generations. Tribes, chieftainships, theocratic fiefs, ethnic and religious minorities, and at last that fundamental cell, the patriarchal family, all are destroyed: a destruction which the modern state brings about blindly and inadvertently.

Let us consider some aspects of this decline. In the first place, the tribes cannot survive in a pacified state where men can move freely. Each of these tribes, one of the thousands who have parcelled out among themselves, in tiny territories, the area between the Persian Gulf, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Tropics, used to be a kind of large exclusive family, shut in on itself, ensuring its own defence and regulating its life in the midst of warring populations. In the peace which reigns today, the tribe languishes, and the moral

ties between its members are loosened. Men get away, sell their lands and marry outside the tribe. The tribe itself becomes a mere territorial command until the day, not so far off, when even its chiefs, through a too rapid decline, will relinquish their position to the benefit of officials from the town.

In Muslim countries, the theocratic fiefs used to be places of refuge and protection. And they were also little spiritual fatherlands. But the territorial unity of command does away with them. On the other hand, as the pretext of the Holy War (which used to justify their existence) has disappeared, in a social and political environment which aspires to other things, their masters too fall into a decadence rendered more rapid by idleness.

The same is also true, and sometimes even more so, of the innumerable Negro chieftainships which gather into a community thousands of inhabitants around a kind of priest-king, spokesman of a highly hierarchical community, conceived in the image of a complicated and mysterious spiritual world. Men and women, lured by the charms of a life freer and more full of amusements, begin to leave the small territory for workshops and public works, for military service and for commerce; they reject the oppressive traditional customs of the elders and lose faith in the efficacy of the rites which once determined their behaviour. They free themselves from this powerful tyranny which, for the common good, often made them go so far as to sacrifice themselves to the divine powers.

Even the numerous religious, ethnic and linguistic communities in the East, and here and there in North Africa, who have remained in the midst of the Muslim and arabized masses, wilt and die. Their members who, in the past, were dangerously dispersed among hostile populations are now (thanks to the improved communications and the attractions of town life) concentrated in one place. And there, modern education serves to approximate these hitherto isolated and fearful minorities to the majorities which persecuted them. In the greater freedom their exclusiveness disappears.

While this rather mechanical levelling of complex societies goes on, and while the work of assimilation, unachieved through long centuries, is completed in a couple of generations, the patriarchal family, last fortress of the past, begins to crumble and fall. Schooling gives the children the advantage over their ignorant parents and upsets the authority of age. Moreover, the modern state will, in matters of rationing, allowances to soldiers' families, and widows' pensions, recognize only the limited household... The architects will build only small houses for these reduced families. In the proletarian tenement where a single room must do, there is no place for a bigger grouping.

Finally, the inhabitants of the new state cease to belong to these

traditional, coherent and ordered societies, every one of which had its part to play in the collective life. They become grains of dust driven in the wind of circumstance. Their mass, ever growing but discrete, congregates around the modern towns created by the West. The proletariat appears in the towns of Egypt, on the coasts of Africa, wherever modern economic effort creates new possibilities of work outside the customary bounds. In these overcrowded neighbourhoods, where patriarchal discipline disappears so rapidly, Africa and the East are in decomposition; they are dying of a gigantic moral disorder, before the West has succeeded in building the order which it has designed.

It would be quite unfair to emphasize only the destructive effect of the 'modern state'. Out of the ruin it brings, a new society is slowly, perhaps too slowly, emerging, but emerging everywhere at the same time.

Here is an innovation for which these peoples were not at all prepared. The individual is called upon to become a free person by the training he receives at school and by the responsibilities he is given in his various positions in the State. We force him to think for himself, to become an independent centre of will and power. It is enough to read the newspapers and periodicals published in Black Africa, to realize from the articles written by native teachers how much will power and sometimes heroism this attitude requires, and how seriously these men take their task. I know no more touching formula of this new state of mind than that which R. Delavignette heard last year from the mouth of a man from the West Coast of Africa: 'Now every Black must be his own White'.

The education of girls aims at an even more complete liberation. In the Berber districts of North Africa it saves them from the narrow and oppressive supervision by the agnates. In Negro territories it raises them from the depths of the polygamous family to the rank of human persons enjoying all their natural rights as we understand them. To realize the revolutionary character of such a liberation, we must appreciate the importance of economic specialization for the Negro woman—among the Bantus for instance, she is strictly imprisoned within the framework of an amazingly primitive agriculture, and tied down to the production and sale of certain kinds of produce.

Few of these changes would be permanent if these men, deeply imbued as they are with a religious attitude, went on conforming to the old local beliefs which, only yesterday, regulated the cycle of rural and human life. But for these ancestral practices new faiths are being substituted, faiths more suited to the needs of the members of these bigger communities henceforth subjected to the mighty

currents of modern ideas. We may observe, in fact, that as an indirect result of the advance of the modern state, a rapid diffusion of Islam and Christianity is taking place.

The Islam, which goes on with its conquests under our surprised eyes, is no longer that of the *marabouts*, with a merely local or provincial significance; and even less is it that of the unassuming devotion still fervently given by country-women to saints represented by stones, by trees or by magic enclosures. It is a purified and reformed religion, sometimes strict and fanatical, but one which unifies everywhere belief and practice. This religion may at times become, as we shall see, the spiritual manifestation of the political ambitions of a vast community spread over half a continent. Even without organized Muslim proselytism, the faith in the One God, expressed in the Arabic language, advances gradually, thanks to the greater facility of communications and the free movement of peoples. It takes hold (this time for good) of those regions conquered superficially, often centuries ago, where rural and nature cults, modest but tenacious plants, survived, humbly hidden within stone enclosures. We may expect, therefore, a deepening of the influence of Islam in the domain it had already conquered, and a further diffusion of it along the principal commercial routes and in the ports. Islam, in becoming modern, completes its historical expansion. Henceforth it will be master of the Northern third of the African continent. And converts are everywhere being gained on the East Coast of Black Africa and on the principal commercial routes of the interior. Taking advantage of the same favourable circumstances, the decline of the tribes and chieftainships, the liberation of the individual, the free circulation and unmolested activities of missionaries, Christianity also takes up its work again, work which from the third to the eighteenth century has often been discontinuous and hazardous. Helped by powerful organizations, Catholics and Protestants erect their churches and found compact communities. Indeed we may sometimes wonder whether these communities (owing to the spiritual and temporal forms which they take) will not become in the minds of the Negroes a substitute for the 'chieftainships' which have disappeared. Another generation of effort, and two-thirds of Black Africa will be transformed into a region in which the Christian populations will preponderate. This is a historical event from which innumerable practical consequences will flow, making possible, in such unexpected circumstances, the development of these 'modern states' in the midst of which the new churches spring up.

The peace which reigns inside the frontiers, the freedom of communications, the development of an economy henceforth linked with that of other parts of the world, have still another unforeseen and

unreckoned result, the importance of which will appear in the building of the new states and which may often modify their structure: certain remarkably endowed races, so far still in the background of the political scene, are playing a role which is becoming steadily more important. Everywhere some ethnic groups reveal today unsuspected aptitudes for commerce, industry, for the liberal professions, and for medicine. Often, by a remarkable paradox, these newcomers (who will easily get rich and win the highest positions) are the pariahs of the past who will, by their success, reduce to poverty and impotence the warrior peoples of yesterday. That is how the Kabyles and the Mozabites of Algeria, formerly looked down upon by the nomads of the table-lands, the Chleuhs of Sous in Morocco, despised by the urban population, the Djerbians and Sfaxians from Tunisia, find their way into the higher social ranks. In Mauritania, the Zenaga, Berber merchants with Negro blood, enrich themselves in the commerce of the Sudan, while the noble Hassan shepherds, their former masters, become paupers. The Ibos of Nigeria, once primitive and anarchic, have become in the space of twenty years business men and artful politicians who aspire to control the destinies of their former conquerors, the Muslims of the north. In the Sahel which runs along the south of the Sahara, the Peuhl conquerors fall into decadence, while the Bamaleke, only yesterday despised, but organized now in strong commercial communities (modernized versions of their animistic fraternities), gain control of the coastal trade. The importance of this new characteristic, revealed in the course of the liberation of these peoples by the West, can be hardly exaggerated. Indeed, the soul of the future nations may undergo a change through the intervention of these newcomers whose constructive genius has not up to now, in the warlike existence of the peoples, found an opportunity to express itself.

The reconstruction of the human communities of Africa and of Asia on entirely new bases assumes the destruction of ancient structures and the adoption of modern plans originally designed for territories a hundred times larger and for populations infinitely more numerous. This reconstruction obviously cannot take place without causing serious moral and social crises. How can these men and women, prompted so quickly by the West to the dignity of membership of a modern state, be able to forget a past which formerly enslaved them so narrowly and left no room for the free play of personality? What spiritual resources have these transitional generations, so poor and so isolated, to enable them to find the means to reconcile the ancient laws with the discipline of the new life? We can recognize the psychological drama which takes place

in the consciousness of all those who suddenly find themselves in contact with the West. Their first, spontaneous reactions should be studied with care.

Nothing, indeed, is more touching than the ardour of these young Negro neophytes when confronted with the diverse forms of our civilization, their naïve and trusting admiration of our techniques, their enthusiasm for our intellectual principles. The young students of a technical school in the Cameroons, who were being shown a film of the reception of the Duc de Broglie into the Academy of Science, a strange but moving choice, thus voice their thoughts: 'It must surely be true', one of them said, 'as we were told in church, that God himself is white, for such miracles to be possible. We cannot struggle against such a power.' Another remarked that the advanced age of some of the academicians, as denoted by their physical appearance, did not prevent them from devoting themselves to Science, which is unthinkable in the case of the elders of a Negro chieftainship. They are the proof of a society dedicated to progress: and he went on: 'What a lesson for us Africans!' This confidence that they have in us, a confidence that demands a breakaway from the past, implies also a violent opposition to their traditional beliefs. It is not without danger. A young teacher from a small township in the Gaboon, transferred to a school in the bush, will feel around him the suspicion of the witch-doctors and the power of those who cast spells, whose vengeance is ready to overwhelm the deserter. When he is afraid that owing to the decay of Europe the tyranny of the idols will be restored, he will say to the white inspector: 'Look, Sir, the bush is gaining on us. May France remain strong!'

Others will cast an invincibly suspicious eye on these innovations destructive of the ancient way of life, and will remain convinced that the old order of things is still incomparably superior to that of the West. I myself will never forget the way with which an old Arab Beduin from the plains of the Gharb in Morocco dismissed with condescending contempt the merely relative value of the most modern machines which we were complacently exhibiting. This was in 1919, on the occasion of a *mousse*m, a big summer fair, on the confines of the Spanish Zone. The French authorities, in order to put an end to the false rumours spread by our neighbours that German planes (said to be invincible) were coming back, had arranged for a French seaplane to demonstrate over the heads of the assembled peasantry. When the seaplane, after a long and noisy flight, came to anchor silently in a lagoon in front of the simple farmers ready to go into ecstasies, the old Beduin, pious Muslim that he was, let fall these words which I heard from his lips: 'There is nothing astonishing in all this: the Christians have got hold of the secret of Sidna Daoud — the Prophet David — on him be peace.'

They have thus been able to make the motor. This motor they put in boats which become steamers; in locomotives, and it makes trains; in cages, and they fly in the air . . . There is neither might nor strength except in God.'

This was, of course, only the popular version of a more profound system of thought, that of Djamal ed Din El Afghani who initiated the awakening of Islam; for him, the civilization of the West was nothing but a material force which it would be easy to vanquish by studying in Europe and wresting the secrets of its technical weapons. This material force, once mastered, would be put at the disposal of a purified religion which, confident in itself and in its destiny, would once more take up its providential mission to rule the world. I sometimes wonder if a small number of Oriental students in our universities, do not, even today, share this easy belief. May they realize however that there is not, at the source of our power, a secret like that of Sidna Daoud. . . .

Sometimes a complaint is heard, deeper and more poignant, which reveals the confusion of a soul close to nature when we imprison it within the abstract bounds of our laws. The Africans have not, perhaps, in spite of the talent of those of them who write in French, formulated it in terms as eloquent as those of Rabin-dranath Tagore, the Bengali poet, who has expressed his dismay when faced with our complicated machines which seem to him so terrible and so tyrannical. I quote these words of his from his little book, *Nationalism*, now thirty years old, so deep and concentrated, and so tragically to the point in the India of today:

A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose. Society as such has no ulterior purpose. It is an end in itself. It is a spontaneous self-expression of man as a social being. It is a natural regulation of human relationships, so that men can develop ideals of life in co-operation with one another. It has also a political side, but this is only for a special purpose. It is for self-preservation. It is merely the side of power, not of human ideals. And in the early days it had its separate place in society restricted to professionals. But when with the help of science and the perfecting of organization this power begins to grow and brings in harvests of wealth, then it crosses its boundaries with amazing rapidity. For then it goads all its neighbouring societies with greed of material prosperity and consequent mutual jealousy, and by the fear of each other's growth into powerfulness. The time comes when it can stop no longer, for the competition grows keener, organization grows vaster, and

selfishness attains supremacy trading upon the greed and fear of man, it occupies more and more space in society and at last becomes its ruling force.

And he also says, even more clearly:

In the West the national machinery of commerce and politics turns out neatly compressed bales of humanity which have their use and a high market value; but they are bound in iron hoops, labelled and separated off with scientific care and precision. Obviously God made man to be human; but this modern product has such marvellous square-cut finish, savouring of gigantic manufacture, that the Creator will find it difficult to recognize it as a thing of spirit and creature made in His own divine image.

Alas! Tagore was only too right, and today we see India broken up into different and hostile nations under the influence of the concept of the modern state. The imperious call of the West continues to be heard, though the Westerners have departed. Its voice reaches further than that of a Ghandi who gave his life in vain trying to save his dream. Like Asia, the whole of Africa, black and white, and even Central and South America, teem with nations in which men, troubled and divided against themselves, mourn, without knowing it sometimes, their lost gods. The poetic voices, welling from among the peoples, which used to extol the free life, have now in the present glorious misery become, for a time, silent. . . .

Let us consider the crises which painfully strike these various peoples whom we have subjected to the same trials.

We have liberated man and woman. But have we thereby made easy the creation of the modern household which is the natural aim of our social and fiscal laws? The African press testifies that we have done nothing of the kind. I do not know a review or a newspaper published by the Negro élites, from the Belgian Congo to Dakar, which does not in every number stand witness to the insuperable difficulties felt by Africa in trying to constitute the monogamous family which our ideal has prescribed. Bad education or the misbehaviour of boys and girls, prostitution, difficulties put in the way of a young couple by local customs, the return to polygamy and its evils, all these are everywhere denounced in vehement terms. The remedies are difficult to find, and their action is limited and slow. In the meantime, the evil spreads.

And how do the ex-pupils of the schools we have established use the modern knowledge they have acquired? Their pretensions increase when they have obtained their diplomas; but once they have left school, their intellectual activity ceases for good, and the

economic and social cadres which we have formed fail to come up to our expectations.

As far as religion is concerned, the depth of Islamic feeling seems doubtful in the youth of Morocco or Algeria who refuse to frequent the mosques erected for them in the schools and colleges. As for the new Christian faith in Black Africa, it must struggle against past beliefs, magical in form, so difficult to uproot, against a general demoralization and against secularism — an entirely new trend in a society hitherto exclusively dependent on divine guidance. Thus we read, in religious periodicals, of Catholics encouraging each other to impose on the penitents sanctions as severe as those which the first Apostles imposed on public sinners in the primitive church. The Protestant missionaries, also, regret that their converts abuse the mercy of a Redeemer ready to forgive 'seventy times seven', when the lightning of an Avenging God who punished criminals and sinners from the heights of Sinai would have been more efficacious in bringing to the straight path these people who are as rebellious against the Law as the Hebrews in the desert. How wise are the founders of Christian churches who reckon on centuries of effort to accomplish their mission! And how incongruous beside this slowness is the haste with which, within less than a generation, the most audacious political changes are made, in this century of the aeroplane, the wireless and the United Nations Organization.

We could go on enumerating these crises: that of the miserable proletariat of the towns, and that of the traditional hierarchies. What is one to think, for example, of the state of mind of that great religious chief of the Yoruba Africans, the three millions of whom have enjoyed a brilliant pagan civilization in the past. Living in the sacred city of Ife, this pontiff (who has been recently chosen by the diviners) must be the arbiter in the interpretation of pagan customs and also the supreme augur. We learn that, for twenty years now, he has been a stationmaster and that he himself belongs to the Christian religion, having been converted by an Anglican Mission. . . .

Let us once again move through the 'time-space' constituted by Black Africa and the Arab countries in the last two centuries. By introducing there under various forms the concept of the modern state, the nations of Western Europe, perhaps without intending it, and in spite of the crises their action has brought about, have made a constructive contribution. Already the American continent is organized into living nations which, whether separate or federated, have acquired prodigious wealth. And now the misfortunes of Europe are giving them a leading role in the destinies of the world of which none of us would have dreamt forty years ago. The empires founded by Europe in Asia are also breaking up into nations;

nations as yet fragile and indeterminate, but which instinctively model themselves on their Western prototypes. What will happen to the Near East and to Africa? Is the African continent destined to become, as its position in relation to Europe would indicate, a kind of political extension of our continent supplied with similar political institutions, as South America became an extension of North America? And if this transformation, now only beginning, is accelerated, what will its rhythm be?

History, Geography, Sociology, combining their insight and resources, try to throw light on a future still obscure. We can distinguish three tendencies. The first and oldest is a little out of date perhaps in the eyes of some, but it cannot yet be taken as condemned by the progress of the world; it lies in the direction of extensive assimilation into European culture. The results of this tendency, within the space of a century, are considerable. One can see them in the changes which have taken place in Angola and the Senegal, linked as they are to European 'parent-states', also in America, in the West Indies and the Guianas, which have remained European enclaves. One can also see the results in the growth of such vigorous and sympathetic personalities as that of the colonial Governor General, Eboué. These older colonies, thanks to the local autonomy they enjoy, will perhaps experience new forms of emancipation.

A second tendency, purely national, can also be traced. Nations have been constituted in the whole Arab East, in Ethiopia and in Liberia. Other nations are being formed on the Gold Coast, in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, through the persevering endeavours of British administrators who try to endow the skeleton of the modern state with a powerful collective soul. The man who perhaps best represents this state of mind is the fiery Nigerian leader Nnamdi Azikiwe. To what extent have the old forms of social life, so incompatible with the establishment of a true national solidarity, weakened in their resistance, to allow the birth, as the West would like, of a new feeling of fraternal equality? Would not the artificial and forced development of a nation out of such a disparate collection of peoples such as Nigeria, produce, as in India, violent dislocations? In Nigeria, the Northern Muslim Provinces form a virtual Pakistan, while on the Coast, formerly animistic and now partly Christianized, enterprising and adaptable intellectuals are stirring, already accustomed to Western ways of thinking, but seemingly devoid as yet of that political wisdom necessary to weld a society still divided and attached to its ancient traditions.

A third kind of development, totally different, can also be observed: the establishment, in the Arabian Peninsula, in North Africa, and in Black Africa, of extensive unions, almost continental in size, based on race or religion, making use of the fragile frames of nations

still too young. The weakened state of Europe allows Islamic or pan-Arab Leagues, United States of the Negro World, to be organized or planned under our very eyes. Today nations, formed some twenty years ago, are so impatient and ambitious as to tear the breast which has nourished them; and in their midst the forces of the past, defeated at one point, rise up unexpectedly at another, no longer merely conservative and static but nevertheless opposed to progress. These forces then take on the aspect of a new racial or religious imperialism which for these nations is infinitely seductive. We see these hardly formed nations amalgamate themselves by alliances and confederations into vast unions, which with a little imagination and boldness, could be represented (after the latest Western political fashion) in the international organizations, as the 'regional organizations' of the world. Such is the case of the Arab League which claims, in advance, the growing nations of Tunisia and Morocco, and which tomorrow, advancing towards the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and the Negro states of Tropical Africa, would reconstitute, stronger than ever, the Arab empires of the Umayyads and the Abbassids. Abder Rahman Azzam has perhaps expressed better than anyone else in print these ambitions, before trying to realize them within the Arab League. Such is the case also of the alliances of coloured peoples vaguely sketched in Negro committees in the United States and Great Britain, in which one sees ancient Africa 'in search of its unity'. The Watch Tower revolutionary movement in South Africa might thus proclaim the unity of the Bantu conqueror races, as the unity of the Sudanese races from the Cameroons to Dakar is being elaborated in plans made in Lagos and Accra this year.

It is, then, in this world of manifold appearances and ill-defined possibilities, that we must try to trace the slow and difficult formation of the African and Oriental nations.

Swift, had he been born in the twentieth instead of the eighteenth century, would surely have made Gulliver one of the passengers in the giant plane the course of which in the heart of Africa we were just now following. It is indeed a kind of Gulliver who, on board, interprets the map of these States put together by the West. It is he who gives them their constitutions and brings with him these monstrous and powerful administrative machines which modify the lives of peoples. But it happens sometimes that the white man, in spite of his power and his means of rapid transport, may unexpectedly have to alight in the bush or in the desert. Then, lying on the ground at night, he can, if he knows how to listen and watch carefully, make the marvellous discovery that the people, white or black, moving round him in their tribes and chieftainships, are not insects,

like bees or ants, with arrested collective instincts. He can understand that these are men, similar to himself, who by means of their intricate speech know how to express the finest shades of meaning; men who have given, in fable or in myth, answers worthy of respect to the problems of fate and the world. He may even succeed, if he takes the trouble, to communicate with these 'little men'. And our Gulliver would then become aware of the infinite consequences of all his actions. He would begin to feel the weight of the crushing responsibilities that lie on him — not so much for the past, which would be a burden of unavailing regrets — but for the future, the shape of which partly depends on him.

Perhaps the picture of Gulliver going aboard one of our airliners is a too arrogant one. Surely we are not giants who can survey other men from on high. We lack too many things to be mistaken for supermen. For myself, I would preserve the memory of a journey I made in the high valleys of the Atlas in Marrakech. In this Berber country, still alive with the memory of past independence and with its immemorial tradition of local government, my task was to study the complex play of political forces in these regions before they disappeared as a result of submitting to the Makhzen — the central government in Morocco. The traveller, a guest of the notables of these settlements buried in the mountains, consulted the elders, pieced together the history of a century of obscure struggles, in order to find out the hidden laws of these minute societies where the political horizon stops at the end of the valley. Moving from one chief's house to the next, he had to cross passes sometimes over 3000 metres high from which he could see in the clear luminosity of the heights a vast horizon made up of mountains. Noting the details of the landscape, he could observe a dozen settlements, their villages grouped round the *agadirs*, the fortresses in which the Berbers stored their grain and defended their independence. Each one of these settlements had its laws, some republican, democratic or oligarchic, under parliaments drawn from the people or the respected elders; others enslaved to the dictatorship of temporary chiefs imposing themselves by force; others again, willingly obeying permanent secular or religious leaders. From time to time revolutions had taken place to consolidate or change what were regarded as wise or obsolete rules of government. One could survey in this unknown corner of the High Atlas all the forms of political life which Europe had known in the course of a long history. The principles which governed these Berber politics were the same as those which Aristotle studied in the ancient Greek city-states where democracy, tyranny and monarchy made war on one another. As far as the eye could reach, we saw from a vantage-point where we had stopped for a moment, men, poor and unassuming, it is true,

but similar to us, weighing in the same balance justice and oppression, faithful to the sworn oath, lovers of order or of freedom. Thanks to the wisdom of Greece casting an intellectual light on the institutions of these barbarians, an intelligible universe, νοητός τόπος, is created, transparent in its lucidity. The traveller felt infinitely secure in the fraternal understanding that he had of the life of a very old people, in spite of the barriers of customs, language and religion.

This vision, never to be forgotten, in the dawn of the rising sun, still lights for us the vast continent which extends from the Chaldea of Abraham to the Morocco of Lyautey and which is extended still without a break, from the ancient Mediterranean where Ulysses sailed to the Cape of Tempests and where the caravels of Vasco da Gama came to anchor.

THE CONTENTED CHRISTIAN

WAYLAND HILTON-YOUNG

IN 1938, 1943 and 1945 there appeared three of the oddest and most exciting novels of this century; *Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength*, by C. S. Lewis. They are a trilogy, but can be read singly. The first two use the apparatus of 'scientifiction', interplanetary travel and so on, and the last mixes Arthurian legend and modern technolatriy. *Out of the Silent Planet* is an allegory of the three parts of man; reason, emotion, and will. *Perelandra* tells anew the story of the Garden of Eden, and *That Hideous Strength* is a *psychomachia* so violent and with such insistent overtones of incarnation and redemption that it almost suggests the story of the Second Coming. They are full of a demonology and angelology compounded from patristic, medieval, and Cambridge Platonist experts, a sense of order which springs from Saints Paul and Augustine, a style which goes regularly and with smooth detail but is capable of taking off into poetry with heavy Miltonic wing-beats, a spiritual ingenuity which reminds one of Donne, an allegorical faculty which reminds one of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, a mythopœic faculty which reminds one of Cocteau, and a sensuous imagination which stands by itself and invites no parallel.

The equipment is not negligible. When I first thought of writing about these books I looked up the reviews. A few took the point, most were not looking for it, some missed it stupidly and irritatingly, but some missed it riotously, gloriously, wide. I made a note of these and later realized that, by contraries, three phrases from them neatly covered the elements which make these novels good and extraordinary.

Of these wildly, fantastically imaginative books, one wrote: 'strained one's credulity'.

Of these self-conscious, very complex, many-layered, many-sourced, very rich, and very subtle myths, one wrote: 'Just a good, good yarn'.

Of these books so glorying in tradition, seeming so firmly to assert that the human spirit has been understood and accounted for, of these intensely and contentedly Christian books, one wrote: 'The best thing of its kind since *Erewhon*'.

Let us then examine in turn the imagination, the mythopœia, and the Christianity of these three novels. They are inseparable really, but for the artificial, secondhand business of criticism one needs some artificial, secondhand distinctions.

Some of Mr Lewis's inventions are unforgettable. In *Perelandra* the hero, arrived on Venus, for which Perelandra is Mr Lewis's name, finds a world with only one fixed land, a pillar of rock, ghastly green and purple, seen on the far horizon of the sea by lightning only, and that is the Forbidden Land, the equivalent of the Tree in this Eden. All the rest is floating islands, but islands so thin that they heave and dip over the waves of the warm sea, and he cannot at first stand up on them. On the islands are heaving woods, and some of the woods are all glittering with reflected light for at the end of each twig there is formed a 'bubble-fruit' made of fresh sea-water drawn up and sweetened by the trees. Touch the bubble and it bursts, leaving on the person and in the air a refreshment that never was on our planet. But it leaves also a conviction that to touch another bubble immediately would be a vulgar excess, apolaustic. Yet as soon as a bubble is burst another begins to form.

In *That Hideous Strength* the central figure, who is not the hero, finds after successive initiations into many secret committees and pressure-groups of the community of evil that they are ruled by the severed head of a guillotined murderer. 'The Head' stands on a wall-bracket and is nourished by rubber tubes. A slice has been cut off the top of its skull to allow the brain, contained only in a plastic wrapping, to 'boil over', thus increasing the area of the cortex.

In *The Great Divorce*, which I do not discuss here because, although it is partly allegorical, it is more didactic than the trilogy and never approaches a myth, day-visitors from Hell to Heaven do not enjoy themselves, because the diamond-hard and diamond-brilliant grass and flowers cut their feet.

The three novels are full of inventions as startling and effective as these, and almost always as allegoric. Each of the strange landscapes, sympathetic dragons, and so plausible spirits, which Mr Lewis scatters through his work with fertile ease, is strictly illustrative. All in *Perelandra* is love, generosity, and abundance; bubbles are always forming and breaking, but since this is Eden each bubble gives moderation with the pleasure. The severed head fed through tubes is itself a symbol of what Mr Lewis in *The Abolition of Man* calls the 'conditioners', and in *The Screwtape Letters* the 'materialist magicians', those who stand outside the Natural Law, the Tao, and invent for themselves the future of mankind. The boiling brain introduces another element which is always present in Mr Lewis's writing: the belief that objects must be treated aright, that one ought not to make that use of a guillotined head, not only because of the harm one does to oneself but also because it just is not the use proper to a guillotined head. The diamond-hard grass leads to the central attitude of all Mr Lewis's work: wrong is soft, boring, dim, and enervating, and right is many-coloured, brilliant, clear, and gay.

If you have this faculty of imaginative description, if you can not only make the reader see again things he has seen before but also make him see things he has never seen and never will see, there are two ways to use it. You can just use it, putting against such *décor* as you can imagine events and persons who have no intrinsic relevance to it, and who do not project their plight upon it, as H. G. Wells did, or you can bind your *décor* and your persons up together and use them for the devising of allegory. Mr Lewis uses his *décor* thus for the devising of multiple allegory. Not only is the fact that the hero was sent in a kind of space-coffin to Venus allegoric of ritual death and rebirth into the service of God, but every stone he saw there, all the weather, all the beasts, and all the relations among them and between them and himself are allegoric too. And yet perhaps 'devising' is not the right word. If you not only know what you believe, but really believe it, which is rarer, and which Mr Lewis does, and if you have this faculty of sensual imagination, probably everything you describe just is allegoric, indeed everything you see just is allegoric. I quote from the dedication to Charles Williams of Mr Lewis's book on Milton. 'When the old poets made some virtue their theme, they were not teaching but adoring . . . What we take for the didactic is often the enchanted.' Yes, if one takes one's credulity with one into an allegory, let alone a myth, it is likely to get strained.

Now an allegory is really only a bit of technique. A simple allegory, like, say, *Animal Farm*, though it may be amusing, exciting, and instructive, is like a man riding a bicycle along the towpath beside the boat of events. Multiple allegory, which is what we have so far found in these novels, is like a lot of men riding along the towpath. But now imagine that the men fall in and are drowned and rot, so that the very water of the river is changed and enriched by them, and so that the blades of the oars of events pull in a medium different from before. What has happened is that the allegory has become a myth. And that is what Mr Lewis does with his allegorical imagination, for the structure of these novels is strictly mythopœic, and becomes more complexly so in each. The first, *Out of the Silent Planet*, is the least mythic; it is still mostly allegoric. Ransom, a university philologist, is taken against his will by a scientist called Weston and his rich and sinister backer in their space-ship to Mars; Malacandra it is called by its inhabitants. For it is inhabited; not, as Weston imagines, by malevolent beings demanding a human sacrifice, which is why he has brought Ransom, but by three peaceful communities of sapient creatures. Weston, looking for gold and shooting at sight, gets into trouble, and Ransom, who has made friends with the inhabitants, pleads for him. There is an effective scene where Ransom tries to translate Weston's exposition of vulgar

planetary imperialism into their language which is, of course, a sort of Eskimo language with no words for murder, conquest, and so on. Mr Lewis's point is easily made. The inhabitants are amazed but merciful, and pack the three Tellurians off home under conditions which make their voyage hazardous and exciting but which have no mythical significance. And there it could be left, not indeed 'just a good, good yarn', but a fairly simple tract against those who hold that there is an automatic virtue in the extension of man's dominion. But no: the three communities of inhabitants, living separately and speaking different languages but loving and understanding each other, are the three parts of man. The *hrossa* live in deep, warm, fertile river valleys amid a high plain; they hunt, sing unwritten songs, love, and laugh; they are emotion. The *séroni* live on the high plain, where the rare air strains human lungs; they calculate, understand, live solitary, calm lives, and are reason. The *pfifltriggi* live in mines and are stained with the earth and its ores; they have large hands and make things of use to all three communities; they are the will. All these are equal but, and here comes the third level of myth, they are all subject, joyfully subject, to the incorporeal *eldils*, who are quite simply angels, and these in turn are subject to an *Oyarsa*, the archangel of the planet. It is from the *Oyarsa* that Ransom learns of the Miltonic cosmology in which all three novels are set. Earth, the Silent Planet, has for its *Oyarsa* Satan himself, and, since the casting out of Satan, there has been no communication between the 'bent eldils' of Earth and the 'straight eldils' of the other planets. Ransom learns of the coming assault on the Silent Planet by the forces of good.

Perelandra is an interlude before the assault. Ransom, and now appears the significance of his name, is sent this time at the direct order of the eldils to Venus, where he finds a naked green Eve. Weston arrives soon after, and then there begins no mere tract with mythical overtones, but a full-blown version of the story of Eden. But this version has a happy ending. God, or rather the straight eldils, able this time to take advantage of the precedent of incarnation which has been established on Earth, send Ransom to hold the balance against Weston, the new Serpent, the first man to break out of the Silent Planet by his own invention, the contumacious scientist, pride, all that Mr Lewis hates. Weston, now fully possessed by Satan, urges the green Eve to pass the night on the Fixed Land, the apparently trivial forbidden thing, and tries to teach her excess and self-sufficiency, or godlessness. The drama comes from Ransom's slow realization of the part he is expected to play and of the only way he can play it, by physical violence. In the end he and Weston have a splendid fight in a cave, and he wins. Eve joins Adam, who has been elsewhere, and together they enter into their inheritance; Para-

dise is unlost. In bare outline it sounds trivial, but the sensual imagination and the Christian conviction that if there had been a Ransom in Earth's Eden the day would have gone differently make this a very moving myth, and a far fuller one than *Out of the Silent Planet*.

But the myth-making faculty is at its highest in the last novel of the trilogy, *That Hideous Strength*. Just as Ransom has been trained in eschatological warfare, so has Mr Lewis tried his hand at smaller themes and comes at last to the promised assault by God upon the Silent Planet. The anchorless, rudderless scientists have decided to force the issue and, at the instructions of the bent eldils, or macrobes (on the analogy of macrocosm and microbe), given through the severed head, they have set up in rural England the National Institute for Co-ordinated Experiments (N.I.C.E.). Into the Institute they draw a footling young statistician; his wife goes the other way, into Ransom's phalanstery of virtue. She has dreams in which she imperfectly sees the initiation of her husband into the circles of evil. This is the first element of this complex myth; good and evil are one flesh and have an understanding of each other, though an imperfect one. Both the young people survive the cataclysm. Second element; the fact that the bent eldils act through rootless scientists, organizers of that which needs no organization, and technocratic statisticians. This is reinforced with some fine tilting at committee-structures, charts of work, and so on. The N.I.C.E. contains the 'conditioners'; those who, cut adrift from absolute values and so absorbed in technique that they have no time for relative values, are left only with *sic jubeo*, *sic volo*. Third element; Ransom is a philologist. So is Mr Lewis. A clear and proper use of words not only avoids muddle) and muddle opens the door to evil) but keeps one in touch with the past and thus with the natural law. Fourth element; the names. Ransom, who bought paradise in Venus with his own blood, goes at first in this book under the name of Mr Fisher-King. To complete the picture, the wound in his foot which he got fighting Weston will not heal. Again, the materialist magicians have names like Wither, Frost, Strake, and Fairy Hardcastle. This last is one of the touches of fancy which are needed to make any novel memorable, even a myth. Fifth element; it is revealed by the straight eldils that the young statistician and his wife were to have a child who was to have done great good. There is a suggestion of the messianic in this. That they have refrained from doing so brings us again to a self-sufficient resistance to natural law, to contumacy. Sixth element, and here we approach the *dénouement*, which is a catastrophe so formidable as strongly to suggest the Second Coming, although in fact it seems the world goes on, as it went on after the Flood and the Crucifixion. Both communities know that Arthur's Merlin is to arise from the dead, and the war rages fiercely about his tomb. It is not known

which side his old magic will lead him to join. He joins Ransom because natural law, the past, and the Tao, join those who respect them. Seventh element; Merlin, though impressive, is also rather comic. Nothing is comic at the N.I.C.E. Eighth element; the Oyarsas of all the planets come down to Ransom and Merlin, and from each Merlin receives a different power. Here, in a passage of tremendous force, Mr Lewis makes a synthesis of the mythical systems which have hypostatized man's several virtues in several gods or spirits. Ninth; Merlin thus armed invades the N.I.C.E., and lets loose the Curse of Babel during the after dinner speeches ('Tidies and foglemen . . .') and, tenth, lets loose also the animals from the N.I.C.E.'s own laboratories. Most of the evil leaders are eaten by the animals, and those who escape are consumed in the fire and flood which cover the countryside — eleventh, the Holocaust. Besides the main myth, made up of these and many other elements, there are various little myths put in for episodes, as when Venus and the *amorini* come down to make the beds.

Both *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength* develop Christian stories into modern myths, but one story is past, the other to come; they are, in fact, the first and last stories of the human race. But the fancy is so happy and the rush of events so headlong that they stand together as one work of art; there is fortunately no question whether this really happened or whether this is really going to happen. In that sense one might, by a feat of sophisticated compression, call it 'just a good, good yarn', but in no other.

Let us now turn to 'the best thing of its kind since *Erewhon*', and see what is the relation between the literature of submission, of which Mr Lewis's trilogy is an example, and the literature of revolt and independence, of which *Erewhon* is an example. To begin with, Mr Lewis is a convert to Christianity, he tells us, and Butler was a convert to atheism. Butler told us all about his conversion, but there is nothing about his in Mr Lewis's work. Indeed the only reference I have found is an incident in *The Screwtape Letters* when the mentor devil explains to his pupil the value of trivial distraction in taking the patient's mind off God: he once prevented a man embracing Christianity by showing him a 73 bus and a newsboy. No, Mr Lewis is discovered right in the middle of Christianity, singing at the top of his voice about how splendid it is, but he does not show us the way in. He is the most contented of Christians, and he says to other Christians: 'How lucky we are,' rather than to the rest: 'Come and join us.' For him, everything is good and pleasant that is not demonstrably bad; most Christian novelists of today hold the other view. 'I know we have won many souls through pleasure,' says the devil in *The Screwtape Letters*; 'all the same, it is His invention, not ours.' In all Mr Lewis's stories and essays the virtuous are exciting

and colourful and the vicious are boring. In *Perelandra* the power of evil, embodied for the moment in Weston, whenever it is left alone with the power of good, embodied in Ransom, begins to speak to him thus:

'Ransom.'

'Well?'

'Nothing.'

This it repeats for days and nights without sleep. In *That Hideous Strength* the N.I.C.E. is always covered by fog, and the central part of its education of neophytes is confinement in a very ugly room. But where Ransom and the good people live the weather, though not always fine, is always exciting. Mr Lewis's work is full of phrases which bring this contrast again and again before the reader: 'frolic sanctity', but 'the realism, dignity, and austerity of Hell', and so on. But the boringness of sin is not trivial, because it is itself sinful.

'The Christians describe God', he writes, 'as one "without whom nothing is strong"'. And Nothing is very strong: strong enough to steal away a man's best years not in sweet sins but in a dreary flickering of the mind over it knows not what and knows not why, in the gratification of curiosities so feeble that the man is only half aware of them, in drumming of fingers and kicking of heels, in whistling tunes that he does not like, or in the long, dim labyrinth of reveries that have not even lust or ambition to give them a relish, but which, once chance association has started them, the creature is too weak and fuddled to shake off.'¹

Mr Lewis commends, or adores, all the elements of Christian virtue, but his especial favourite is inequality. He is at his happiest when he is contemplating the hierarchy of created being. He is not mealy-mouthed about this: discipline inheres in all relations, and women are subject to men. In his book on Milton he presents *The Taming of the Shrew* and *King Lear* as two expositions of this theme; in the one discipline is restored in time, in the other not. In *That Hideous Strength*, Ransom, clothed with all the authority of an instrument of God's purpose, says to the young woman whose marriage is going wrong: 'Did no one ever tell you obedience is an erotic necessity?' Thus the hierarchy continues upwards through all the angels and principalities and powers at the reviving of which Mr Lewis is so good. Everything is roped in, Olympus and Valhalla as well as the Christian spirits, and all are bound together in joy and love. 'Every being is a conductor of superior love, or *agape*, to the being below it, and of inferior love, or *eros*, to the being above it . . . This is not metaphor.'² No, this is not metaphor for Mr Lewis any more than it was for the Renaissance theologian he is discussing. Mr Lewis is himself involved in the Dance of Discipline, the Hier-

¹ *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 64.

² *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, p. 73.

archic Cotillon, and, like Milton, he loves it because he sees it all, and the beatific vision as well.

'And by now the thing must have passed altogether out of the region of sight as we understand it. For' (Ransom) 'says that the whole solid figure of these enamoured and interinanimated circlings was suddenly revealed as the mere superficies of a far vaster pattern in four dimensions, and that figure as the boundary of yet others in other worlds: till suddenly as the movement grew yet swifter, the interweaving yet more ecstatic, the relevance of all to all yet more intense, as dimension was added to dimension and that part of him which could reason and remember was dropped farther and farther behind that part of him which saw, even then, at the very zenith of complexity, complexity was eaten up and faded, as a thin white cloud fades into the hard blue burning of the sky, and a simplicity beyond all comprehension, ancient and young as the spring, illimitable, pellucid, drew him with cords of infinite desire into its own stillness. He went up into such a quietness, a privacy, and a freshness that at the very moment when he stood farthest from our ordinary mode of being he had the sense of stripping off encumbrances and awaking from trance, and coming to himself.'¹

Mr Lewis's Christianity is very protestant; he is in the Great Dance but he needs no one to teach him his steps, for the steps belong to his place in it, and he is in his place; the layers of the hierarchy are many and intricate, but they are transparent, and through them all shines the light of God himself.

It is startling, if one has been reading Mr Lewis, to think suddenly of the anglo-catholicism of Mr T. S. Eliot as it appears, for instance, in *The Cocktail Party*, and how there one comes suddenly up against the impervious black layer of priesthood.

Mr Lewis is a protestant writer in a country which is on the whole protestant, and he is established, like his church. It is illuminating to compare him with a Catholic writer in a country which is on the whole Catholic, say M. Mauriac; a catholic writer in a protestant country, say Mr Graham Greene; and an atheistical innovator, say M. Sartre, and to see what part this quality of being established plays in their work. Let us begin with the extremes, Lewis and Sartre. What would Mr Lewis say of M. Sartre? In the following passage he draws a contrast, implicitly to his own advantage, which fits the case.

What are the key-words of modern criticism? *Creative*, with its opposite *derivative*; *spontaneity*, with its opposite *convention*; *freedom*, contrasted with *rules*. Great authors are innovators, pioneers, explorers; bad authors bunch in schools and follow models. Or again, great authors are always 'break-

¹ *Perelandra*, p. 252.

ing fetters' and 'bursting bonds'. They have personality, they 'are themselves'. I do not know whether we often think out the implication of such language into a consistent philosophy; but we certainly have a general picture of good work bursting out from certain centres of explosive force — apparently self-generating force — which we call men of genius.¹

Mr Lewis is just not interested in bursting bonds or being himself; he has his place in the Great Dance where the bonds are the pleasure, and he cannot be anything but himself, since his self is his place. One might say that M. Sartre has his place too, that he was heir to the tradition of existentialism. But the tradition is short and sprang moreover from Christianity, from which M. Sartre revolts. In any case, at least in imaginative literature, M. Sartre is so very much the biggest man in the tradition that the mere use of the word tradition suggests the tail wagging the dog. He is certainly an innovator, though his manner is not bombastic enough to suggest the bursting of bonds, and there is too little autobiography in his writing for us to know whether he is much concerned with 'becoming himself' in a literary sense. But his characters are very deeply concerned with that. There is no Great Dance for them; each is wholly free and wholly responsible but each, with the ambiguity which makes M. Sartre's work exciting yet obscure, must become yet more free, free in another way, if he is to achieve that which is to be achieved. One does not know just what is to be achieved, but the characters in M. Sartre's trilogy of novels, as it so far is, try and try to achieve this second freedom; it is different for each. Nobody tries to achieve anything in Mr Lewis's trilogy; there is no strain, only some good fights. M. Sartre is alone in the jungle of human life, not hacking a way through it, but explaining for the first time, he would say, how it grows. Mr Lewis denies that it is a jungle at all. M. Sartre starts from scratch; Mr Lewis says only God can do that. M. Sartre's characters have a *princesse lointaine*; Mr Lewis is dancing on the shoulder of his princess. M. Sartre is a romantic.

Before going further with this, let us look at our two intermediate novelists. M. Sartre, the innovator, is alone in the jungle saying: 'This is how it works.' The English catholic, Mr Greene, the adherent of a minority sect, calls to us through the jungle: 'There are some people here who say this is how it works. I think I'll stay with them, though it is rather uncomfortable.' The French catholic, M. Mauriac, the adherent of a majority sect, says: 'We all know how it works, but look how marvellous in detail is the way it turns rottenness to good.' Mr Lewis, the adherent of another majority sect, just says: 'How marvellous!' They display in different

¹ 'Christianity and Literature', in *Rehabilitations*, p. 186.

degrees this quality of establishment. M. Mauriac shows the wonderful agility with which his church can absorb and turn to right ends even the most unpromising aberrations of human motive, and that makes him a better novelist than if he had only his great understanding of human motive to rely on. Mr Greene is beginning to do the same, but with him there are more reservations, more discomforts. He evidently finds in his faith as much pain as pleasure; he may be sure of it, but he is far from sure of himself. To use Mr Lewis's terms again, he is straining at his bonds, but they will not break. Nor does he wish them to; and it is this strain which makes his novels painful to read. It is the excellent narrative craft which makes them readable.

So there we have them in order; M. Sartre who stands alone and enjoys it, Mr Greene who adheres to a church but is frightened by his adherence, M. Mauriac, who belongs to a church but is still self-conscious enough to concentrate on its specific merits, and Mr Lewis, who belongs to a church so fully that he sees all merits in it and it in all merits.

One must prefer the poles. The literature of partial belonging, of strained adherence, may be good, may even amaze by its goodness, but it will itself remain strained and partial. At the best it may cast a bright light on some narrow sector of the human condition, but it can never encompass the whole. Only the literatures of total submission and total independence can do that.

THE NOVELS OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

DAVID C. REECE

'FITZGERALD's few . . . gnawing gin in silver slabs and sniffing about the sham and tinsel of it all'. Westbrook Pegler's remarks about F. Scott FitzGerald's 'group or cult of juvenile crying-drunks' represents in an extreme form the callous attitude of the American press to FitzGerald's personal tragedy at the time of his death. Their additional ignorance of his value and significance as a writer led John Dos Passos to write that 'the notices in the press referring to Scott FitzGerald's untimely death produced in the reader the same strange feeling that you have when, after talking about some topic for an hour with a man, it suddenly comes over you that neither you nor he has understood a word of what the other was saying'.

The basic assumption of these notices was that Scott FitzGerald was the voice of the Jazz Age, the laureate and historian of the Roaring Twenties, a symbolic figure like 'Shipwreck' Kelly, 'Lucky Lindy' or Warren Gamaliel Harding. This inaccurate view was nothing new, for some of FitzGerald's contemporaries made the same mistake. Gertrude Stein stated flatly, and, for once, simply, that Scott FitzGerald was the 20's. Critics of the 30's, whose judgements of FitzGerald are ludicrously distorted and unfair, shared this view and dismissed him with a sweeping gesture along with the rest of his rotten play-boy decade. Even so wise and just a commentator as Frederick Lewis Allen, in his brilliant review of the 20's, *Only Yesterday*, was at fault here. Allen portrays FitzGerald as the chronicler of his times and refers to *This Side of Paradise* as if it were his major and most characteristic work. The blurbs of his British publishers foster today what we may call the 'Twenties Myth' of Scott FitzGerald.

This legend is allied with an equally false popular opinion that FitzGerald produced one popular book, *This Side of Paradise*, only one really good book, *The Great Gatsby*, and mounds of ephemeral trash for the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Esquire*. Even so mellow a critic as Lionel Trilling has stated this view in, of course, a more civilized way: 'Except once, FitzGerald did not fully realize his powers . . . But (his) quality was a great one and on one occasion, in *The Great Gatsby*, it was as finely crystallized in art as it deserved to be.' Although Trilling's estimate of *The Great Gatsby* is not put too high, he is, by implication, unfair to FitzGerald's last two novels, *Tender is the Night* and *The Last Tycoon*, and to such short stories as 'May Day', 'Rich Boy', 'Crazy Sunday' and 'Babylon Revisited'.

Both assumptions, that *The Great Gatsby* stands on a lone peak of quality, and that FitzGerald belongs to the Twenties, can be disproved by even a cursory examination of his novels. It will disclose, too, why FitzGerald's books are now all in print — even in England, a country whose people he detested — at a time when the Twenties are as remote to us as the Gay Nineties or the Hungry Forties.

This Side of Paradise, FitzGerald's first novel, which launched him dramatically on his own colourful and sad career, is largely responsible for the Twenties Myth. When it was published in 1921, it also awoke America with a bump to the problem of the Younger Generation. In this portrait of the *mores* of college boys and debutantes, FitzGerald displays the quality of intimacy which characterizes all his fiction. He writes from the inside. Paul Rosenfield said that FitzGerald sensed thoroughly 'in every fibre the tempo of privileged post-adolescent America . . . what he writes reflects the environment not so much in its superficial aspect as in its pitch and beat. He knows how the talk sounds, how the dances feel, how the crap-games look'. Despite the many faults of *This Side of Paradise*, its immaturity, its posturings and its borrowed ideas, this quality gives it an intrinsic value. As FitzGerald wrote of it later — and he was a severe self-critic — 'A lot of people thought it was a fake, and perhaps it was, and a lot of others thought it was a lie, which it was not'.

Today we can accept *This Side of Paradise* as a good picture of FitzGerald's Younger Generation. To this limited extent it is true to say that he is an accurate chronicler of his own age — or age-group — but we can only be astonished to learn that the book was regarded at the time as 'a bible of flaming youth'. But here we have Mr Allen's impeccable authority for it that it 'caused a shudder to run down the national spine; did not Mr FitzGerald represent one of his well-nurtured heroines as brazenly confessing: "I've kissed dozens of men. I suppose I'll kiss dozens more"'. It was incredible. It was abominable. What did it all mean? Was every decent standard being overthrown? To us it all means an amusing revelation of the Victorian outlook of post-war parents. At the same time, its pictures of young love actually illustrate the essential innocence of the sex portrayed in all FitzGerald's work. Heywood Broun underlined this virgin quality when he noted that in *This Side of Paradise* 'a chorus girl named Axia laid her blonde head on Amory's shoulder and the youth immediately rushed away in a frenzy of terror and suffered from hallucinations for 48 hours. The explanation was hidden from us. It did not sound altogether characteristic of Princeton'. Nor was it typical of the Jazz Age when Freud's collected works were the real bible of flaming youth, and the flappers were much exercised with releasing their libidos. In this respect anyway, FitzGerald is rather too reedy and adolescent a voice to speak for the Roaring Twenties.

There is another 'teen-age' quality in *This Side of Paradise*, a nostalgia for the past, a regret for the passing of youth. It is symbolized by Amory's journey at the end of the book to look once more on the dreaming spires of Princeton and sigh for his dear dead college days. This nostalgia reflects FitzGerald's own attitude — one he retained all his life — for his hero Amory Blaine is FitzGerald. Dr Mizener calls the book 'transmuted biography'. This is true of all FitzGerald's writing. The characters, scenes, incidents and anecdotes of his novels and short stories are lifted wholesale from his own experience. In *This Side of Paradise* the unsuccessful love affair and the resulting three week drunk, which is only stopped by the advent of prohibition, are literal descriptions of FitzGerald's broken engagement with Zelda and its consequences. Even passages from letters written to the author by Monsignor Fay are included verbatim in *This Side of Paradise* as letters from Monsignor Darcy to Amory. Zelda's premarital diary lends the authentic flavour to Gloria's journal in *The Beautiful and Damned*.

FitzGerald's nostalgic memories of Princeton are expressed in some beautiful lyrical passages in *This Side of Paradise*, but his immaturity as a writer was responsible for many grave faults in the book. It is badly constructed and ill disciplined. It is a jumble of narrative prose, verse and dramatic dialogues. Its imagery was often fatuously extravagant, as in this passage about one of Amory's lesser puppy-loves: 'Eleanor was, say, the last time this evil crept close to Amory under the mask of beauty, the last weird mystery that held him with wild fascination and pounded his soul to flakes.' But despite such grotesqueries, there is enough evidence in the fertile ease of the writing in the book to mark FitzGerald as a born writer and one destined to be hailed by a contemporary rival as the possessor of 'the best narrative gift of the century'.

In his second book, *The Beautiful and Damned*, published in 1922, FitzGerald's writing had still to achieve this exalted level. The book was more carefully constructed than its predecessor but it retained many signs of immaturity, including a ridiculous dialogue between Beauty and the Voice. The prose in first parts of the book is mannered and formal and derivative. Much of the subject matter is equally borrowed. FitzGerald's great friend Edmund Wilson described *This Side of Paradise*, only half in jest, as 'an exquisite burlesque of Compton Mackenzie with a pastiche of Wells thrown in at the end'. Just as Amory Blaine's socialism in that book is derived from the Fabians, so *The Beautiful and Damned* is marred by many imported attitudes and opinions which FitzGerald felt to be fashionable. The leading attitude was the utter futility of life, a pose which struts through the book and is recited at length in Maury Noble's mid-night speech from the Mariette railway station.

FitzGerald had not yet learned to follow his own advice given in his hero Anthony Patch's comments about Richard Caramel, the novelist in *The Beautiful and Damned*. 'You know I was thinking today that I have a great confidence in Dick. So long as he sticks to people and not to ideas, and as long as his inspirations come from life and not from art, and always granting a normal growth, I believe he'll be a big man.'

In the latter half of *The Beautiful and Damned*, the style and content gives way in a marked fashion to a more natural and realistic narrative style, a change which coincides with Anthony and Gloria's progressive deterioration. The last part of the book is a graphic description of this sordid degeneration, unrelieved by any light or lesser shadows. William Troy described it as 'not so much a study in failure as in the *atmosphere* of failure'. It is certainly a remarkable literary product of the Roaring Twenties, when buoyant optimism was the key-note of the age. What FitzGerald himself called, rather grandiloquently, his 'wise and tragic sense', and what Dr Mizener calls 'his acute sense of disaster' are fully exhibited in the last half of *The Beautiful and Damned*. They are strange qualities to be found in the laurate of the Twenties, the era of the Big Bull market and the ubiquitous booster, when, in FitzGerald's own words, America indulged in 'The biggest, gaudiest spree' in her history. FitzGerald enjoyed the spree as much, if not more, than anybody else, but his books have the arid taste of hang-over.

Another feature of the book, which hardly smacks of the prevailing philosophy, is the author's frequent assault upon Business and the Businessman. Amory Blaine's distaste for commerce in *This Side of Paradise* is eloquently echoed by Anthony Patch, whose degeneration is intended by the author to be seen as largely the result of a fastidious and intelligent young man's failure to fit himself into a crass commercial society. In an implausible incident describing Anthony's pathetic attempt to become a salesman, FitzGerald goes out of his way to sneer at that knight errant of commerce. This was hardly typical of a time when even Jesus Christ was praised as the first of the super-salesmen and, as Frederick Lewis Allen reports, 'The great God business was supreme in the land'.

The atmosphere of failure in *The Beautiful and Damned* is succeeded, in FitzGerald's next book, *The Great Gatsby*, by the pervasive flavour of doom, although it was published in 1925 in the middle of the Coolidge prosperity. While the makers of the latest film version of *The Great Gatsby* paid tribute to the Twenties Myth of FitzGerald by portraying Jay Gatsby as a gun-toting bootlegger, they still found it necessary to introduce the film with a quiet scene in a cemetery and a view of Gatsby's tombstone. Even Hollywood could not mistake the air of ultimate disaster which broods over

every page of the book. It is one reason for FitzGerald's popularity today.

Gatsby is the story of a man who thought he could recreate the past and recapture the girl he had lost years before to a greater wealth and power. He was a man with 'a heightened sensitivity to the promises of life' who believed in 'the green light, the orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us'. In the end, as we are made to feel is inevitable from the beginning, he pays with his life for 'living too long with a single dream', and we are left with the memory of 'what preyed on Gatsby', 'what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams'. Nick Carraway, the narrator of the book, described Gatsby's 'extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person'. In depicting Gatsby's inevitable destruction, FitzGerald turned his back on his own generation who also believed in the orgiastic future and trumpeted forth their proud boast that nothing was impossible in the land of the free. FitzGerald was a wise dissenter.

After reading *The Great Gatsby* one finds it hard to understand another myth which has grown up about its author. He is commonly portrayed as one who worshipped the rich, especially the very rich. There is that apocryphal anecdote about Hemingway, who replied to FitzGerald's remark that: 'You know Ernest, the rich — they're different from you and me', by snarling 'Yeah, they've got more money'. Even so gifted a critic as V. S. Pritchett refers to FitzGerald as 'the poor boy who idealizes the rich'. It is true that many of FitzGerald's characters are wealthy and his scenes are laid in the upper strata of society. It is true that he admired the grace and beauty which wealth sometimes brings into people's lives, and, like Gatsby, he envied 'the youth and mystery that wealth imprisons and preserves'. But it is true also that FitzGerald understood and exposed the corruption which wealth too often creates. In *The Great Gatsby* it preys on the hero and defeats him, and Nick Carraway is left to pass judgement. 'They were careless people, Tom and Daisy — they smashed up things and people, and then retreated back into their money or vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made . . .' And just before he left Gatsby for the last time Nick expressed his opinion more succinctly: '“They're a rotten crowd”, I shouted across the lawn. “You're worth the whole damn bunch put together”'.

In *The Great Gatsby* Nick expresses the puritan morality which is latent in FitzGerald, a legacy of his mid-western upbringing. In many ways the book is a subtler version of that common American fable in which the corruption of the opulent East is contrasted with the poor and simple honesty of the West. After Gatsby's death Nick

returns home to the Middle West feeling that he wants the world to be 'in uniform and at a sort of moral attention for ever'.

By using Nick Carraway as the narrator, FitzGerald is able to express his own moral attitudes and also to turn his plot around a focal point. The result is a beautifully constructed novel. When he was writing *The Great Gatsby*, FitzGerald told Max Perkins 'I want to write something new, something extraordinary and beautiful and simple and intricately patterned'. The finished book hit every target.

FitzGerald is able to organize his material with great skill in this novel because he is less closely involved in it. He attains a degree of objectivity lacking in the first two books. In a letter written to Edmund Wilson after the publication of *Gatsby*, FitzGerald points to what he considered one weakness of the book. 'I gave no account of (and had no feeling about or knowledge of) the emotional relationship between Gatsby and Daisy from the time of their re-union to the catastrophe.' This is surely a very striking illustration of how much the characters FitzGerald created were outside himself, which enabled him to see them more clearly and to weave them more surely into the intricate pattern of the plot.

The story is told in a series of scenes introduced and brought into focus by the narrator. In this and the later novels FitzGerald displays a mastery of dramatic technique, an expert skill in building up atmosphere and in the use of suspense and surprise. The horrible party in the flat Tom Buchanan keeps for his mistress and the climax scene in the grilling heat of a New York hotel room are two fine examples. There are also some evocative long shots and fade-outs in which FitzGerald displays a brilliant film technique. In one of them, Nick looks over to his neighbour's garden where Gatsby stands gazing across the bay to Daisy's house. 'I didn't call to him, for he gave a sudden intimation that he was content to be alone — he stretched out his arms towards the dark water in a curious way, and, far as I was from him, I could have sworn he was trembling. Involuntarily, I glanced seaward — and distinguished nothing except a single green light, minute and far away, that might have been the end of a dock. When I looked once more for Gatsby he had vanished and I was alone again in the unquiet darkness'.

The green light, which is Gatsby's first renewed link with Daisy, becomes a symbol in the book for his great illusion, and the monstrous eyes of Dr J. T. Ecklenburg on the billboard, brooding over the ash-heaps, symbolize the inevitable disaster. FitzGerald uses symbolism very effectively in all his books; in *The Beautiful and Damned* it is Anthony's stamp album and Gloria's fur-coat; in *Tender is the Night* it is the spiv newspaper vendor who appears at the climax and at the denouement and symbolizes the corruption of Americans by the Old World.

In *The Great Gatsby*, symbolism and dramatic technique are supplemented by the superb ironies of the plot. These culminate in the death of Tom's mistress as she throws herself at the wrong car, which sets off a chain of events leading to Gatsby's murder in the magnificent swimming pool he had not used before all summer. Last of all there is Gatsby's funeral when, of the hundreds of guests who caroused at his parties all summer, only one appears to mutter his epitaph, 'The poor son-of-a-bitch'. Such methods transform what H. L. Menken described as 'little more than a glorified anecdote' into an almost perfect example of the dramatic novel.

The people as well as the plot are brilliantly executed in *The Great Gatsby*. V. S. Pritchett wrote that FitzGerald's 'gift for rendering the surface of place and people in quick images or a few words which awake memory or experience is unsurpassed by his contemporaries'. In *The Great Gatsby* FitzGerald is able to convey the essence of personality by describing one salient characteristic. In Daisy's case her voice epitomises the charm and mystery which haunted Gatsby. Nick describes it as 'the kind of voice that the ear follows up and down, as if each speech is an arrangement of notes that will never be played again . . . There was an excitement in her voice that men who cared for her found difficult to forget: a singing compulsion, a whispered "Listen", a promise that she done gay and exciting things just a while since and that there were gay, exciting things hovering in the next hour'. Later in the book Gatsby gave Nick the key to it.

"Her voice is full of money," he said suddenly. That was it. I'd never understood before. It was full of money — that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the cymbals' song of it . . . High in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl . . .' In Gatsby's case, his smile characterizes his romantic charm. Nick described it 'as one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in a life. It faces — or seemed to face — the whole eternal world for an instant, and then concentrated on *you* with an irresistible prejudice in your favour'. These passages illustrate, too, that quality of romantic charm which is an outstanding feature of all FitzGerald's writing.

From these brilliant lightning sketches in *The Great Gatsby* FitzGerald turned to a more ambitious portrayal of character development in his next novel, *Tender is the Night*, completed in 1934. It is not so successful a psychological novel as *The Great Gatsby* was a dramatic novel, but it contains a greater depth and power.

The action of the novel takes place in the Twenties but its theme is one divorced from that flamboyant decade. It is a subtle picture of deterioration written with psychological insight and skill and all of FitzGerald's 'wise and tragic sense'. It is the tragedy of Dick Diver who is doctor and parent, as well as lover, to Nicole, his schizophrenic

wife. There are two contrasting developments of character in the book. The deterioration of Dick's personality and character coincides with Nicole's slow recovery of strength and sanity. Finally, just when Dick is at the end of his moral tether, his wife is completely cured and strong enough to break away from her subordination to his personality. The full irony of this two-fold development reaches its climax in the scene when Nicole finally cuts the cord.

'While he did not answer she began to feel the old hypnotism of his intelligence, sometimes exercised without power but always with substrata of truth under truth which she could not break or even crack. Again she struggled with it, fighting him with her small, fine eyes, with the plush arrogance of a top dog, with her nascent transference to another man, with the accumulated resentment of years; she fought him with her money and her faith that her sister disliked him and was behind her now; with the thought of the new enemies he was making with his bitterness, with her quick guile against his winning and dining slowness, her health and beauty against his physical deterioration, her unscrupulousness against his moralities — for this inner battle she used even her weaknesses — fighting bravely and courageously with the old cans and crockery and bottles, empty receptacles of her expiated sins, outrages, mistakes. And suddenly, in the space of two minutes she achieved her victory and justified herself to herself without lie or subterfuge, cut the cord for ever. Then she walked, weak in the legs, and sobbing coolly, toward the household that was hers at last.

'Dick waited until she was out of sight. Then he leaned his head forward on the parapet. The case was finished. Doctor Diver was at liberty.'

FitzGerald's prose has a natural rhythm and bite as well as grace and beauty. It is easy to see why Thomas Wolfe wrote to FitzGerald that 'I still think, as I have always thought, that *Tender is the Night* contains the best work you have ever done.' The depth of understanding, the delicacy of touch and the skill with which FitzGerald portrays and develops his characters in action endorse this opinion. The first overt sign of Dick's deterioration comes when he allows himself to fall in love with Rosemary Hoyt, the young film star, and she appears twice more to mark the further stages of the rot which has set in. Tommy Barban, the tough soldier of fortune, to whom Nicole turns at the end of the book, is used by FitzGerald to illustrate her own tragedy. Barban is a man inferior to Dick in every way except one — he loves Nicole solely and simply as a woman, while to Dick she is the patient and the child, the first but only one of the many whom he is compelled to love and make secure. The contrast between the two men and the complicated relationship between Nicole and Dick are superbly portrayed in a passage from the

denouement scene which records also the bitter levity which has replaced Dick's old extraordinary charm.

Unwillingly acknowledging Dick's logic, Tommy was moved by an irresistible racial tendency to chisel for an advantage.

'Let it be understood that from this moment,' he said, 'I stand in the position of Nicole's protector until details can be arranged. And I shall hold you strictly accountable for any abuse of the fact that you continue to inhabit the same house.'

'I never did go in for making love to dry loins,' said Dick.

He nodded, and walked off toward the hotel with Nicole's whitest eyes following him.

'He was fair enough,' Tommy conceded. 'Darling, will we be together tonight?'

'I suppose so.'

So it had happened — and with a minimum of drama; Nicole felt outguessed, realizing that from the episode of the camphor-rub, Dick had anticipated everything. But also she felt happy and excited, and the odd little wish that she could tell Dick all about it faded quickly. But her eyes followed his figure until it became a dot and mingled with the other dots in the summer crowd.

Unfortunately the construction of the book is not equal to the analytical skill nor to the beauty of the prose. Rosemary's introduction at the very beginning and the presentation of the first part from her viewpoint give the misleading impression that she is to be the central character instead of merely a recording device. There is too much in the book. It is full of unnecessary characters and incidents, such as Prince Chillicheff, Earl Brady, Royal Latham and the Chilean millionaire.

Part I of the book is the only one cut perfectly to pattern. Part III, which FitzGerald was forced to revise with the constant aid of gin, suffers from the resulting concentration on the particular at the expense of the architecture of the whole. Dick's deterioration proceeds with implausible speed, and there is insufficient build-up for Nicole's transference to Tommy. This technical fault accentuates a graver flaw. We are shown when Dick's degeneration first began. Dick explains to Rosemary near the end that 'The change came a long way back — but at first it didn't show. The manner remains intact for some time after the morale cracks'. We are shown where and how the cracks first appear on the surface, and FitzGerald sets out the milestones along the downward path, the first meeting with Rosemary, the beating-up in Rome, the row at the sanatorium. He describes when, where and how, but he does not explain *why* Dick suffered this deterioration. We are shown how he suffered from a

'lesion of energy', how he was emotionally drained until he became an Emotional Bankrupt. But why he suffered the loss of his former great emotional energy, of his exceptional charm, of what Fitzgerald describes as 'his power of arousing a fascinated and uncritical love', is *never* satisfactorily explained. The external pressures on Dick are not sufficient of themselves to account for it. The force of Nicole's great wealth is never seen to be putting him under much strain. Her insanity and his constant pre-occupation with shielding her from the world might well have caused the loss of his own vital force, but, in fact, he gets worse as she gets better. Dick's inability to practise his profession while they are living on the Riviera is not responsible, because the drinking only begins in earnest after he has returned to his work at the clinic in Switzerland. The drinking itself is only a symptom, not a cause. The mystery of his Emotional Bankruptcy is never explained, so we are forced to accept it as a *Mystique*.

FitzGerald himself believed very strongly in this idea of what he called the crack-up, the hollow state caused by overdrawing on moral and physical resources. In fact he elevated it to a philosophical concept. His biographer accepts this mystique of Emotional Bankruptcy without reservation, and V. S. Pritchett goes further and connects it with the moral bankruptcy of an entire generation of intellectuals. But FitzGerald's case does not lend itself to generalizing from the particular. His own crack-up was the product of very concrete causes: from the physical ailment of alcoholism and a host of other ailments including T.B., from the horrors of his beloved Zelda's insanity which was of a kind to cause his hopes often to be raised only to be crushed out again, from the financial pressure of his hopeless extravagance and the agonizing loss of pride and integrity caused by the resulting necessity of writing trash for the magazines and eventually in becoming a script-writer. FitzGerald's tragedy was of an entirely personal kind. It is not a premise on which to base any concept of general validity. Emotional Bankruptcy is an unsatisfactory explanation for Dick Diver's tragedy in *Tender is the Night* because there are no such compelling reasons as caused its author's own crack-up. FitzGerald himself gave the common-sense answer to this mystic concept in 'May Day', the short story in which it was first mentioned: Phil Dean reprimands his old college friend Gordon Sterrett who has come to him in desperation to borrow some money.

'You're — you're in awful shape. I never heard you talk this way before. You seem to be sort of bankrupt — morally as well as financially.'

Gordon replied, 'Don't they usually go together?'

Dean shook his head impatiently. 'There's a regular aura about you that I don't understand. It's sort of evil.'

'It's an air of worry and poverty and sleepless nights,' said Godon rather defiantly.

Whatever it is that Emotional Bankruptcy really means, in FitzGerald's own case it certainly did not mean the evaporation of his writing ability. *The Last Tycoon* is convincing evidence of that. It is hard to judge the book fairly as it is only a fragment of six chapters, written just before FitzGerald died at the age of 44. It is certainly long enough — and most certainly good enough — to be in itself a firm refutation of the belief that FitzGerald was a creation of the Twenties and that his powers reached their zenith only once, in *The Great Gatsby*.

The story of Stahr, the last of the great producers in Hollywood, is told with the architectural and dramatic skill of *The Great Gatsby* combined with the subtle insight and depth of *Tender is the Night* — and this despite the fact that its six chapters are only a rough, uncut, largely unrevised version of what was to be the final work.

The first chapter of the book describing an interrupted aeroplane flight to Hollywood is a brilliant model for all first chapters of novels. In it the atmosphere of Hollywood is created before we ever get there and Schwartz's death epitomizes its harsh penalties for failure. Hollywood's place in America, not only geographically but also historically through the scene at the Hermitage, its significance in modern American life, and its faulty liaison with the rest of the country, all are vividly depicted. The rails are laid for the plot and two major characters, Cecilia and Wylie Whyte, are introduced and delineated. The hero Stahr is presented after an appropriate movie build-up in which FitzGerald uses the expert dramatic technique of revealing character by reflection in the acts and attitudes of others. Finally Stahr's almost Messiah role in Hollywood is symbolized by the beautiful image of the plane soaring high over the mountains before sinking down into 'the warm darkness of the Glendale airport'.

Among the rough notes which FitzGerald had jotted down while working on *The Last Tycoon* was the phrase, in capital letters, ACTION IS CHARACTER. This well-tried working rule is brilliantly followed in this book. The passage in the second chapter which describes a scene in Brady's office during an earthquake catches in a camera flash the essence of Cecilia's father and of the parasitic nonentity Jacques La Borwitz.

'We didn't get the full shock like at Long Beach, where the upper stories of shops were spewed into the streets and small hotels drifted out to sea — but for a full minute our bowels were one with the

bowels of the earth — like some nightmare attempt to attach our navel cords again and jerk us back to the womb of creation.

'Mother's picture fell off the wall, revealing a small safe — Rosemary and I grabbed frantically for each other and did a strange screaming waltz across the room. Jacques fainted or at least disappeared, and Father clung to his desk and shouted, "Are you all right?"' Outside the window the singer came to the climax of *I love you only*, held it a moment and then, I swear started it all over. Or maybe they were playing it back to her from the recording machine.

'The room stood still, shimmying a little. We made our way to the door, suddenly including Jacques, who had reappeared, and tottered out dizzily through the anteroom on to the iron balcony. Almost all the lights were out, and from here and there we could hear cries and calls. Momentarily we stood waiting for a second shock — then, as with a common impulse, we went into Stahr's entry and through to his office.'

Here is the concentration and economy of FitzGerald's final prose, with the immature affectations and extravagance pruned away. The imagery in *The Last Tycoon* is simple but vivid as in the picture of Manny Schwartz, the broken-down tycoon, staring after Stahr on the plane 'with a shameless economic lechery'.

FitzGerald's gift for dialogue, which he had from the beginning, is at its best in this passage between Wylie Whyte, the sardonic screen-writer who is in love with Cecilia, and Cecilia herself who is in love with Stahr.

'Are you going to sing for Stahr?' Wylie said. 'If you do, get in a line about my being a good supervisor.'

'Oh, this'll be only Stahr and me,' I said. 'He's going to look at me and think, "I've never really seen her before".'

'We don't use that line this year,' he said.

'— Then he'll say "Little Cecilia", like he did the night of the earthquake. He'll say he never noticed I have become a woman.'

'You won't have to do a thing.'

'I'll stand there and bloom. After he kisses me as you would a child —'

'That's all in my script,' complained Wylie, 'and I've got to show it to him tomorrow.'

'— he'll sit down and put his face in his hands and say he never thought of me like that.'

'You mean you get in a little fast work during the kiss?'

'I bloom, I told you. How often do I have to tell you I bloom.'

'It's beginning to sound pretty randy to me,' said Wylie. 'How about laying off — I've got to work this morning.'

'Then he says it seems as if he was always meant to be this way.'

'Right in the industry. Producer's blood.' He pretended to shiver. 'I'd hate to have a transfusion of that.'

'Then he says —'

'I know all his lines,' said Wylie. 'What I want to know is what you say.'

'Somebody comes in,' I went on.

'And you jump up quickly off the casting couch, smoothing your skirts.'

'Do you want me to walk out and get home?'

FitzGerald's expert handling of idiom and colloquialisms and his gift for ironic humour are all here. It is not surprising that whole chunks of dialogue from *The Great Gatsby* were incorporated wholesale in the play and film versions of the book. When working in Hollywood FitzGerald himself wrote the script of one of his best short stories, 'Babylon Revisited', and when another writer was hired to revise it years later he refused saying that it was the one perfect script.

It is a measure of FitzGerald's final, almost frightening objectivity that *The Last Tycoon* is considered to be the only book about Hollywood by a screen-writer which is not marred by sneers and self-pity. Despite FitzGerald's harrowing experiences with such producers as Joseph Mankiewicz ('Joe the Mank') and Walter Wanger, in *The Last Tycoon* he refers constantly to drunken screen-writers and always contrasts them unfavourably with Stahr, the great producer and administrator.

Stahr is portrayed, ironically, as the last individualist in Hollywood, where he himself contributed greatly to reducing film-making to a matter of co-ordinated machinery. Like Gatsby and Dick Diver, Stahr is a unique individual. His character stands out solitary against its background of time and place. FitzGerald's heroes are not merely props in the social scenery, or the tools of a social analysis, and that is one reason why his novels are not condemned to recede into period pieces of the Twenties. The other reason is the brilliant literary craftsmanship which is not confined to *The Great Gatsby* but is to be found at its best also in *Tender is the Night* and *The Last Tycoon*. It will ensure their status as classics.

ERNEST COEURDEROY: A PROPHET OF REVOLUTION

HANS KOHN

It is well known that the future role of Russia in European politics was the subject, in the nineteenth century, of much speculation. Looking back upon them now, some of the predictions of writers early in the century may well seem to us remarkable, even when we have made a certain allowance for their cryptic character. They are not easy to interpret. But there is little doubt that Russia in those days was a remarkably attractive object for the prophetic eye to dwell upon. And, naturally enough, the prophets were divided; some were ruled by fear, others by hope, and a few (like de Tocqueville¹) were content to announce their anticipation of events with the fatalism and the confidence of a disinterested judge.

Western Europe, especially its liberal and revolutionary wing, in the years between 1830 and 1866 regarded Russia as the enemy of liberty, progress and civilization. Russia was feared equally by Mazzini and by Michelet, by the liberals in the Frankfurt Parliament and by the leaders of the Prague Slav Congress of June 1848. Napoleon's prediction from St Helena that Europe would be within fifty years Republican or Cossack was generally accepted. This hostility to Russia found its expression also in the enthusiastic support for the Poles in their struggle against the great Eastern power. One of the rare contrary voices was raised by the French nonconformist Pierre Joseph Proudhon in *La Guerre et la Paix*.² There he protested against the reconstitution of Poland and compared it with efforts to reconstruct the Saxony of Widukind or the kingdom of the Visigoths. But Proudhon was one of a very small minority. The violence of Marx's opposition to Russia is well known. He saw in it the declared enemy of his Revolution. In his articles in the *New York Tribune* he poured scorn on Britain for not pursuing the preparations for the Crimean War and the war itself with sufficient energy. He blamed British statesmen for appeasing Russia. Many French and Polish writers went so far as to declare the Great Russians to be not Slavs or Europeans but Turanians and Asiatics.³

¹ *De la démocratie en Amérique*, I, ch. xix (1835).

² *La Guerre et la Paix* (Bruxelles, 1861), II, 448 f. He was answered by Elias Regnault (1801-68), *L'Odyssée Polonaise précédée d'une lettre à M. Proudhon* (Paris: Dentu & Franck, 1862). But Proudhon was pro-Polish in 1848-9. See *Le Peuple* of November 5th, 1848 and of January 7th, 1849.

³ The best known representative of this school was the French historian Henri Martin (1810-83) whose *La Russie et l'Europe* (Paris: Furne, Jouvett &

But among the few moved by hope, one of the more interesting figures of the 1848 period, today almost forgotten, was a young Frenchman, Ernest Coeurderoy (1825-62), who participated actively in the Revolution and who later spent his life in exile, refusing even to accept the amnesty. By profession he was a physician and shared the positivist and scientific outlook imparted by that training. In his style he reveals himself as a typical enthusiast of that lyrical period, full of exuberant passion and messianic vision. He was an anarchist, influenced by Proudhon, and he aroused much opposition by his 'scandalous' conviction that the triumph of liberty in Europe depended on a Slav hegemony which he thought inevitable. He was certain that the bourgeois mind, the sense of property and economic materialism condemned France and the nations of the West to decay. Sometimes he seems to have something in common with his Russian contemporary Bakunin in his Pan-Slav period. But Bakunin was a more sober commentator than Coeurderoy, and in the end joined the pessimists. In 1847, in the well known speech which Bakunin delivered in Paris in celebration of the anniversary of the Polish uprising, he expressed his sympathies for Poland and his hatred for Russian despotism.¹ His romantic Pan-slavism did not last into his later years. In his speech before the Congress of the League for Peace and Freedom in Berne in 1868 he declared that whoever wishes the liberty and happiness, the intellectual emancipation and the moral dignity of the people must work for the destruction of the Russian Empire.²

¹ 17^e anniversaire de la révolution polonaise, discours prononcé à la réunion tenue à Paris pour célébrer cet anniversaire, le 29 Novembre 1847 par M. Bakounine, réfugié russe (Paris: au bureau des affaires polonaises, 1847.) He began: 'Partout le nom de Russe apparaît comme synonyme de brutale oppression et de honteux esclavage.'

² M. BAKUNIN, *Die Bekämpfung des Zarismus*, rede gehalten auf dem Kongress der Friedens- und Freiheitsliga in Bern 1868, Ed. by Ernet Drahm (Berlin: R. L. Prager, 1925). The speech itself is in French.

Cie, 1866) carried the motto: L'Europe aux Européens. He was a forerunner of some contemporary political thinkers, in demanding a European federation against Russia, otherwise Europe will be conquered by Russia and 'l'Amérique, notre fille, doit préserver seule tous les éléments supérieurs de l'humanité... Il n'y aura plus que deux puissances sur la terre, qui la partageront entre la lumière et les ténèbres. Toute vie morale se réfugiera dans' U.S.A. Should Europe unite, there would emerge three powers, U.S.A., the European federation, and the Tsardom of Moscow, covering eastern Russia and northern Asia and no longer Europe's enemy. Martin's thesis was also supported by the Polish author Franciszek Duchinski (1817-93), *Peuples aryas et tourans, agriculteurs et nomades. Nécessité des réformes dans l'exposition des peuples aryas — européens et tourans, particulièrement des Slavs et des Moscovites* (Paris: Friedrich Klincksieck, 1864). See also Michelet, *La Pologne Martyre* (Paris: Dentu, 1863) who protested against the subordination of Czechs and Poles to 'la tribu finnotatar, le Kremlin byzantino-mongol'.

Coeurderoy was of the opposite opinion. He saw the salvation, the liberty and happiness of the people of Europe in the triumph of the Russian Empire. In 1852 he published the impressions of his experiences during the revolutionary years, under the title *De la Révolution dans l'homme et dans la société*. There he proclaimed that the only road to salvation led through Violence, War and Catastrophe, to be brought about by the Flood of the North which would inundate the south of Europe. He summed up his battle-cry in his letters to the journal *L'Homme*: 'Vive l'universelle Guerre! Vive l'universelle Révolution! Et vivent les Cosaques qui nous apportent l'une et qui forceront l'autre!' In the cry for the universal revolution, the generation of 1848 joined him. But it rejected totally his position expressed in the first and third part of his battle-cry. What he there desired, war and an invasion of the West and of France by Russia, seemed in 1848 and in the following years to the Western revolutionaries, the very desire of the royalists and of the European reaction. The socialists and liberals of 1848 believed in peace, at least as a slogan, and recognized their enemy in the Cossack Russia of Nicholas I.

In October 1854, Coeurderoy published in London at his own expense a book of 437 pages, *Hurrah!!! ou la Révolution par les Cosaques*.¹ The book appeared at the moment when the British and French were besieging Sevastopol. To many Pan-Slavs in Moscow and to a few Western observers, the Crimean War appeared as the beginning of the decisive struggle between the East and the West. Even a deeply religious man like Alexis Khomyakov greeted it in his *Letter to a Foreign Friend before the Commencement of the Eastern War* (1864) as the dawn of 'a decisive era in the destiny of the world'. But Coeurderoy alone identified the universal war with the universal revolution and both with the death of the 'Franco-Latin races' and the rise of the Slav race. He wrote out of a deep disgust with the pettiness of the European liberals and revolutionaries, and out of a disenchantment with the experience of 1848. To a certain degree he shared the feelings of Herzen, but Herzen did not look to Tsarist Russia and the Cossacks, he looked to revolutionary Russia, which he was then convinced would never be like European socialism 'juste-milieu'. Herzen never abandoned his liberal point of view and never turned Pan-Slav. He anticipated no good from the Crimean War, and his journal *Kolokol* (1857-67) is a lasting monument to the strength of his liberalism. Coeurderoy is neither a liberal nor a socialist, neither a patriot nor a republican. He is the spokesman of the eternal rebels. He rejects privilege as much as

¹ There is no mention of a publisher or printer. But it is well printed with relatively very few typographical errors, though the author could not revise the proofs.

communism, the republic as much as the empire. Everything in the world he knows is ripe for total destruction. Thus he calls for war and welcomes it as the redeemer on behalf of 'le Dieu des criminels, des opprimés, des révoltés, des pauvres, de tous ceux qu'on torture'. Western civilization appears to him frozen into immobility. Revolution, on the other hand, is everything that is not civilized, that is not immobilized in the past; it is everything that strives to be born. The West is an immense cemetery of peoples and religions; the East the great workshop of new forces. 'I tell you that there is no life for you except in the universal ruin. And as you are not numerous enough in Western Europe for your despair to cause a breach, seek outside Western Europe. Seek and you will find. You will find in the North a people who are totally disinherited, totally homogeneous, totally strong, totally pitiless, a people of soldiers. You will find the Russians.'¹

Only after this war, and the death of the world, can we enjoy the new life of the true revolution. The Slavs appear as the instrument of redemption because they are nearer the ideal of equality than the French. The Slavs live in slavery under a regime of equality. While the Occidental peoples have much to lose by a total revolution, the Russians have hardly anything to lose by it. In the West one is faced by a thousand contradictory authorities and interests; the Russians face only one despotism. This brutal, avowed, concentrated absolutism of the Slavs is preferable to the hypocritical, divided and changing despotisms of the West. The sixty million Russian peasants will more easily master the handful of boyars than the few thousand civilized revolutionaries in the West can master the great number of property owners. The Russian people, in addition, will form the link between the old civilizations of Europe, frozen in their narrow frontiers, and the peoples of Asia roaming in the vastness of their steppes.

Coeurderoy never doubts the victory of Russia in the coming struggle with Europe. 'While the Slav world gets more and more unified through despotism, the Germano-Latin world more and more approaches dissolution through anarchy. While every Russian is a soldier who with docility takes his rank in the army of conquest, every civilized human being is a property owner who wishes to preserve his parcel of land, or a socialist philosopher who proudly vindicates his part in the work of destruction.' The West is satiated and desires rest. The Russians are made eager by their very privations. The West thinks that it has ideas and yet 'we have only memories which hinder us from thinking courageously'. The Slavs know that they have no ideas and therefore they are more open to ideas than the peoples in the West. 'We are the female races full of

¹ *Hurrah!!! ou la Révolution par les Cosaques*, p. 21.

grace, delicacy and voluptuous sensuality. They are the male races who hunt the female races, rape them and fertilize them.¹

On this mixture of fancy and observation Coeurderoy based his predictions of the future. He believes that Russia will unite all Slav peoples, but not in a federation of free peoples. For only a huge centralized Slav state, under the despotism of one will, will be able to fulfil the great task of conquest and thereby regenerate mankind. The Slav autocrat will have a clear consciousness of the mission which his people has to fulfil, and his mission will be spread by a general enthusiasm. He will call up some peoples under his banner in the name of liberty, others he will win over by his agents, by gold and by treason. He will know how to profit from the existing divisions of Europe which he will take care to promote; and he will add ever new protectorates to his sphere.² The Slavs will accept this despotism as the only means of achieving victory, though later they may overthrow it. Neither despotism nor revolution are half-way measures with the Slavs. Russian despotism will defeat Europe because of its great and united force. The new subjects will love it as they loved Napoleon, as they love all successful masters. They will sing the praise of the Russian despotism because this despotism will despise them. It will demolish all privilege under the levelling iron of its authority.

While the British and the French besieged Sevastopol, Coeurderoy predicted the fall of Constantinople to the Russians before the end of the year 1855. 'Oh, Constantinople! The sun of thy glory will rise over the universe! Then the map of the world will be redrawn! It is necessary that the Revolution be accomplished! The Russians thirst for blood.'³ Britain and Turkey will then be forced out of the war. Russia will continue the war against France; corruption and appeasement will help Russian victory. France with Belgium and the former Confederation of the Rhine will be put under the rule of a Russian archduke, the Slav races will mingle with the Latin races, finally overpopulation and the growth of wants will force a revolution, and the new age of liberty will dawn. Europe will be divided into three federations, the Scandinavians in the north, the Slavs in the middle, the Latins in the south.

It is interesting to note that Coeurderoy predicted a better future for the United States. He praised their federal system which assures liberty. But the United States will not influence decisively the events in the Old World. There, for the time being, the leadership falls to

¹ *Ibid*, pp. 60-6. There are some accents in Coeurderoy which recall Nietzsche. In the last passage quoted, Coeurderoy apparently thinks of the French and the Latin races, and forgets the Teutons. They would be regarded by other Latins and probably by themselves as a 'male' race.

² *Ibid*, pp. 189-95.

³ *Ibid*, p. 351.

Russia. 'The next revolution in Europe will be made by Violence, by Centralization, by Russia; the other revolution, by Liberty, by Federation, by America will come only much later when the consequences of the first revolution have been exhausted.' Between the United States and the Slav world the spheres of influence will be delimited by agreement, the sphere of individual liberty represented by the Anglo-Saxons and the sphere of human solidarity represented by the Slavs.¹ After Britain has evacuated India, the Russians and the Americans will invade Asia. Endless revolutions will agitate China, and the two great invading opponents will try to influence the outcome of these revolutions.

This is the political vision with which Coeurderoy concludes. But it is not his ultimate goal. He could do no more, he writes, than to give a glimpse of the social destruction about to be let loose. But this audacious Negation is to be followed by a no less certain Affirmation. And he promises to write another book describing the social reconstruction. 'The socialist Revolution, that is the Individual, that is Happiness! What could such a revolution do with the present men as they are, regimented men who deny the surpassing excellence of Self-interest, of Wellbeing, of Pride and of individual Liberty.' He looks forward to years of health which would give him the leisure to predict the future. 'Then I shall predict all the future events according to their hour. And with my ardent word I shall force them into reality as the spring rays of the sun awaken the anemones! Then I shall break the seal which suffering forces me to put on the terrible Book of the Future. And from the depth of my exile, calm as in the night of the grave, I shall write in each of my terrifying pages the menaces and the promises of the Eternal Revolution.' Thus Coeurderoy concludes his book, a prophet and a law-giver like the later Nietzsche. Like him he despaired of the pettiness of historical civilizations, like him he appealed against history to nature, to natural man before the rise of Greek society and Christian ethics. Coeurderoy recognized in 'the Russian' this natural man who would destroy the world of history. Like the Slavophiles, Coeurderoy believed in the distinctive character and the mission of the Russians. But while for the Slavophiles 'the Russian' was the embodiment of nature as seen through the eyes of Rousseau and Herder, the message of peace and love, of Christian concord and humility, for Coeurderoy 'the Russian' represented an entirely different type of nature: the pitiless force of ever recurrent destruction and rebirth.

¹ *Ibid*, 400-5.

BOOK REVIEWS

BERNARD BLACKSTONE: *English Blake*. Cambridge University Press, 25s. net.

It is always salutary to ask oneself what justification there is for any particular addition to the number of existing books, and this is more especially so in such a case as the present; for some forty books on Blake existed before the publication of Dr Blackstone's, and these included such works as the scholarly and thoughtful book by Damon, and the brilliant intuitive study by Bronowski.

There is, however, despite the fact that it contains little new material, a justification for this book of Dr Blackstone's. It is concerned with placing Blake in the setting of English life and, more particularly, of the English influences on his thought.

It is, nevertheless, more than questionable whether Dr Blackstone's book has taken the best form. Part I (the first 193 pages) gives a straightforward survey of Blake's life and works. The biographical work is based largely on Gilchrist, and the additional material provided by Ruthven Todd in his *Everyman* Edition of Gilchrist. The interpretations of the works are partly Dr Blackstone's own, but they draw, as is natural and sensible, on previous interpreters. His interpretations are often interesting, but they sometimes do not seem to be closely enough related to the main purpose of the book, namely, to emphasize the English setting out of which Blake's work grew. On the other hand, they do help to make the book a useful introduction to Blake both for students and for the general reader. This, however, does not seem to be the purpose of Part II (the remaining 250-odd pages): here Dr Blackstone keeps tenaciously to his main concern. This main concern, though, is a special one, an emphasis on one aspect of Blake, which does not make Part II of the book qualify as part of a self-contained introduction to Blake. Thus, in my view, Parts I and II of the book serve different and inconsistent purposes, and this seems to me a blemish. Parts I and II, with some adjustments, might well have made two separate books.

I have two more criticisms of the book as a whole. The first is that Dr Blackstone, writing from a standpoint highly sympathetic to Blake, at times tends to confuse the reader by making a point in such a way that it is bound to be unclear to many readers whether the point is Blake's or Dr Blackstone's. My second criticism is that Dr Blackstone's sympathy with Blake's standpoint is so strong that he does not adopt a sufficiently critical attitude to some of Blake's propositions, with the result that he does not appear to see some of the inconsistencies in Blake, or any dangers in his doctrines.

To turn to detailed examination: Part I reviews the life and works of Blake chronologically. The biographical detail is well documented, and presented perceptively and in an attractive style. Dr Blackstone quotes freely but aptly from the poems, letters and ancillary sources, and he carefully expounds each of the major poems, indicating the symbolic significance of such characters as Oothoon, Theotormon, Orc, Los, Urizen, Luvah and Tharmas, and pointing out subtle shifts in Blake's symbolism and doctrine. Dr Blackstone's attitude to the gigantic invented system of symbolism is that it is wise to believe that it was demanded by what Blake had to communicate. This view is bound to remain questionable. A totally new system of symbolism certainly avoids the irrelevant and dangerous associations of an old one: but it also forgoes the vast potential which old symbols carry, and it repels by its total unfamiliarity. Careful exposition will certainly always be required for the Prophetic Books, and Dr Blackstone's work in Part I forms, as I have said, a useful introduction to them.

It would be idle to pretend, however, that for close students it is a substitute for such line-to-line commentary as that by Damon.

Part II, which is entitled 'The Everlasting Gospel', is sub-divided into three sections, called 'Man and Nature', 'Man and Society' and 'Man and God'. The main feature of Dr Blackstone's book is undoubtedly his examination, in this Part, of Blake's standpoints in the philosophy of history, natural philosophy, sociology and theology. This examination has the merit of being detailed, and of containing generally (though not always) adequate reference to key works by other writers with whom Blake is being compared, such as Bacon, Locke, Pope, Berkeley, Reynolds and Paine.

The first chapter of Part II, entitled 'The Counterpoint of History', throws much light on Blake's antipathy to the ancient Greeks and Romans, to the philosophies of Bacon, Newton and Locke, and to the anti-'enthusiasts' of the eighteenth century.

The chapter called 'The Material Universe' investigates the relations of Blake's cosmology to theosophical thought, and sets Blake's philosophy of nature in vivid contrast with those of Bacon and Newton. Perhaps the most interesting feature of this chapter, however, is the detailed comparison of the idealism of Blake with that of Berkeley, who is clearly shown to be an important source of Blake's philosophy of nature. This chapter ends the first Section of Part II.

The next chapter, entitled 'The Proper Study' seems to me the weakest in the book. It contains much interesting material, but epistemological and moral issues are rather confusingly intermingled under the *nomen* of 'psychology'. In a later edition I should hope to see this chapter re-cast.

The following chapter, called 'Morality', is, on the other hand, a good exposition of Blake's moral views, and does much to make clear such utterances as: 'Men are not admitted to Heaven because they have curb'd and governed their Passions or have no Passions, but because they have cultivated their Understandings'.

A special chapter follows on desire, love and marriage, in which Blake's views are related to his personal experiences.

The subject of education is next dealt with, and pertinent reference is made to educational treatises of the eighteenth century, in particular to that of Isaac Watts, entitled *An Essay Towards the Encouragement of Charity Schools*. Blake's emphasis on the educative value of spontaneous play is singled out for special mention.

This (second) Section of Part II concludes with a chapter on the social conditions of Blake's day, with particular reference to the working classes, and to children. This largely makes the ugly reading it should, but ends with a consideration of Blake's renunciation of external revolutionism and adoption of a practical Christianity strongly reminiscent of that of Tolstoy.

The last Section of Part II is to me the most interesting part of the book. Its first chapter traces the development of Deism. Newton's position is shown to be interestingly peculiar, and once again Blake's links with and deviations from Berkeley are brought to light.

The following chapter, entitled 'The Bible', is an excellent piece of work. With detailed reference to Paine's *The Age of Reason* and Bishop Watson's reply, together with Blake's annotations on the latter, Dr Blackstone gives a well-defined idea of Blake's attitude to biblical inspiration and interpretation.

The next chapter passes in review Blake's references to Jesus, and this is followed by a chapter examining Blake's claims as a preacher of the Christian gospel, and another explaining Blake's view that art is divine worship.

Blake's views on art are then examined in detail, and Dr Blackstone brings out the consistency of what Blake says on art with what he says about other things, and thereby underlines the importance of Blake as a world-watcher of a

high order, whether right or wrong. Blake's depreciation of Greek, Roman and Renaissance art is examined, and, once again, though the comparison is not made by Dr Blackstone, one is reminded of Tolstoy. (I should much like to see a comparison of the views of Blake and Tolstoy not only on art but on Christianity and on the social order.) In the chapter under review Dr Blackstone also follows closely Blake's scathing comments on Reynolds's *Discourses*, and shows the admirable suitability of Reynolds as a catalyst for the extraction of Blake's views on art.

The book concludes with a penetrating little chapter on Blake's vision, and the magical impression he made on some of his contemporaries, and suggests that Blake's poetry and designs could play an important part in the education of new people 'freed from fear'. There is no doubt in my mind that this could be so: but the sceptical thought arises once one has emerged from the spell of Blake: 'Is it really desirable that there should, yet awhile, be many beings "freed from fear"?' As with all powerful agents, the 'uses' of Blake may be rather strictly limited. The rejuvenation of anarchism may only have a temporary value and strictly specific application. Where there is too much fear it is good to fear less, but where there is too little fear surely it will be good to fear more?

To sum up: This book is really two books, the first of which forms a useful introduction to Blake's literary work, and the second of which contains detailed studies, varying in quality, of Blake's views on important topics, designed to bring out Blake's intimate connexion with English life and thought. Despite its defect of form, however, *English Blake* is certainly worth reading, and, in parts, very good. It is also well illustrated, largely by photographs of Blake's own illustrations to his poems.

THEODORE REDPATH

MARCHETTE CHUTE: Geoffrey Chaucer of England. *Robert Hale*, 15s. net.

In the preface to *To the Road Xanadu* Livingston Lowes wrote: 'I am not sure indeed, that one of the chief services which literary scholarship can render is not precisely the attempt, at least, to make its findings available (and interesting, if that may be) beyond the precincts of its own solemn troops and sweet societies.' The Henry-James-like construction of this sentence obscures the genuine conviction with which it was written. Fortunately, Lowes has left us good examples of the sort of book he envisaged, not only in *The Road to Xanadu*, but also in his *Geoffrey Chaucer*, a simply-spoken book which is shaped but never burdened by his great learning in this field.

Such works are rare. They occupy a middle zone between the work of scholarship, fully armed with 'apparatus', and the disarming 'Learn-at-Home Library' volume. They are most rare in the area of Chaucer studies, where the would-be reader probably needs most help, and Miss Chute, who has already performed a similar service for Shakespeare, sets out in the present volume to make Chaucer, as a person and as a poet, available to the reader who has neither the time nor the training to carry out his reading at the level of scholarship, but who wants something more than a potted guide. I have no doubt that her way of working is meeting with disapproval in academic circles, but she can take comfort from the sentence I have quoted from Lowes and from the undoubted measure of success she has achieved both in her *Shakespeare of London* and in the present book.

Her method is to eschew all footnotes save those of her own which elucidate statements in the body of the text, all appendices and all references to the sources of her statements, though she includes a fairly comprehensive bibliography. In preparing the English edition, however, she might have ensured that all books published both in America and in this country were referred to under their English editions. Important books which have appeared since the American

edition was published should also have been included. Thus the reader is referred to H. S. Bennett's article on 'The Author and his Public', published in 1937, but since then it has been incorporated in his *Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century*, and this is absent from the bibliography.

Having eliminated the usual academic scaffolding, the author writes a continuous narrative, weaving biography, historical and social background and literary criticism into a single texture. The style occasionally drops into journalese (she writes of Dante: 'The swarthy, restless, unhappy exile had been buried more than fifty years earlier and his bowed figure walked no more in Ravenna') but Miss Chute succeeds in conveying the character of the public events in which Chaucer was involved without falling into a 'dull catalogue of things' when dealing with the surviving personal facts about him. She errs, however, in saying, on p. 94, that the Eagle's reference to Chaucer's reading habits in *The House of Fame* is his sole excursion into autobiography. At least three other passages must be taken into account: the Host's description of his physical appearance, the lines in the prologue to *The Legend of Good Women* in which he confesses that only the advent of spring can lure him from his books, and the lines further on in that prologue in which he refers to his 'litel herber'.

The non-academic reader, then, will find this an easy book to read, one that will give him a great deal of background material, ranging from the sort of boat in which Chaucer would have crossed the Channel to the opportunities he had for buying his books. In default of Coulton's *Chaucer and his England* (now growing out of date, anyway) this book can be recommended, though the reader will still need to go to Muriel Bowden's *Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* for more detailed discussion of the pilgrims, for instance, or to *Chaucer's World*, by Edith Rickert, for documentary material. (Both these works are omitted from the bibliography.) The weakest parts of the book are the passages of literary criticism, a weakness which comes largely from Miss Chute's tendency to sweeping generalization. Writing of Chaucer's lack of a 'high style' she observes, correctly, that 'the ideal of rhetoricians like Geoffrey de Vainsauf was never to use an ordinary word if an extraordinary one could be substituted,' but she spoils the point by going on to say, 'in the same way that an eighteenth-century English poet would have scorned to use an ordinary word like "fish" if he could find a phrase like "the finny denizen of the deep"'.

If a second edition is called for, the opportunity should be taken to correct a number of errors. The River 'Were' (p. 4), though perhaps spelled that way in the contemporary narrative from which Miss Chute drew her account, should read 'Wear'. At the bottom of p. 6 we read: 'Wine was the national drink of all classes, since beer had not yet been introduced'. This is a curious half-error. The second statement is true enough, since beer, brewed from hops, was not introduced until the early fifteenth century. But ale, the equivalent, was brewed as early as the Roman occupation, and it was ale that formed the staple drink of the poor rather than wine, as Chaucer himself indicates in the opening lines of *The Nun's Priest's Tale*. On p. 10 and again on p. 86 Miss Chute takes too optimistic a view of the cleanliness and upkeep of city streets and inter-town roads. Her opinion can be corrected by consulting the Selden Society's publication, *Public Works in Medieval Law*. On p. 45 it is suggested that Chaucer went to one of the law schools in Holborn, but only Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn are within the Holborn boundary, and if Chaucer attended an Inn of Court at all, then it was to the Inner Temple that he went. (The error is repeated on p. 230.) Moreover, it is mere speculation to link the Inns of Chancery with the Inns of Court as centres of legal education in Chaucer's day. This association is more probably a development of the fifteenth century. Miss Chute must also think again about her statement on p. 127: 'Very little is actually known about fourteenth-century law'. She should also reconsider the poem to Adam Scriven. That the Boethius

translation and *Troilus and Cryseide* are mentioned in the same line does not necessarily mean that they were sent to Adam for copying at the same time (p. 139).

D. S. BLAND

V. EHRENBURG: *The People of Aristophanes*, Second Edition. *Basil Blackwell*, 30s. net.

The first edition of this book appeared in 1943; the second edition is not only augmented by a widening of the field from which the evidence is drawn but also considerably revised. Dr Ehrenberg describes the society and economy of Athens as it was in the lifetime of Aristophanes, using as evidence primarily Aristophanes' own work and the fragments of other poets of the Old Comedy.

The book is organized in such a way as to make a sharp contrast in character between text and footnotes. The text is essentially 'popular'; I do not know if Dr Ehrenberg recoils from this word, but I use it deliberately to mean that the book can be read with understanding, interest, and profit by the intelligent Greekless reader, who will find in it a much higher level of historical learning, accuracy, and judgment than is common in a 'popular' book. The footnotes are for the scholar; they give good up-to-date bibliographical guidance and are full of interesting and attractive interpretations of difficult passages in Comedy and elsewhere. I would be reluctant to rate the main text, for the purposes of the scholar, as anything higher than an *index rerum* to Old Comedy. I do not mean that the picture presented is false; far from it; but I doubt if any scholar can escape a growing uneasiness at the curious relation between Dr Ehrenberg's conclusions and the greater part of the evidence on which he appears to base them.

The root of the trouble is the division of the evidence into two categories, one primary and the other corroborative. It seems clear from the Introduction that Dr Ehrenberg is familiar with this objection — I expect he is sick of it — and that he has met it to his own satisfaction. Not knowing all his reasons, I press the charge. The book is *not* an attempt to evaluate Comedy as a historical source; apart from a highly generalized caution, Dr Ehrenberg does not tackle this important and complicated problem at all. Nor is it an elucidation of Comedy by independent evidence, but exactly the reverse. There is only one situation in which a division of evidence into 'primary' and 'corroborative' is justified, and that is the existence of a category of evidence whose transmission has been different in kind from the rest and comparatively exempt from corruption. Thus, if we are interested in questions of spelling, or dates, or sums of money, we do right to take inscriptions of the period concerned as fundamental and demand that the evidence of literary sources — which, after all, we know only through papyri and manuscripts — should be consistent with them or be rejected. Again, a public document recording a political decision is in a different category from an orator's assertion, a century later, that no such decision was made. But Comedy does not come into this peculiar category.

It may happen that within a given period one source is virtually the only source, and that the process of change is rapid enough to make the use of evidence from neighbouring periods perilous. But neither condition is satisfied by Dr Ehrenberg's subject. Aristophanic Comedy is certainly a major source for the Athens of 430-390 B.C., but with Antiphon, Andocides, the early speeches of Lysias, and the earliest of Isocrates all in the field, its importance does not amount to monopoly. Moreover, although literary, artistic, linguistic, and political changes in the Greek world occurred rapidly and drastically between the middle of the fifth century B.C. and the middle of the fourth, social and economic habits at middle-class and working-class level remained remarkably stable over a much longer period. Whatever the reasons — and the lack of any decisive

development in means of production and communication may well be the ultimate reason — the student of authors as far apart in time and place as the early lyric poets, Isaeus, and Theocritus is struck less by their differences than by the extent to which they illuminate one another. To argue from the language of Hyperides to the language of Aristophanes is often improper; to argue from the 'people of Hyperides' to the 'people of Aristophanes' is not only proper but necessary.

Old Comedy is a compound of fantasy and parody with the familiar and unheroic. Dr Ehrenberg emphasises its historical value by laying great stress on the latter elements, but he seems to deceive himself in practice, though not in theory (pp. 37ff.), in treating the element of fantasy as easily discernible and separable. There is no modern type of drama with which Old Comedy as a whole may be compared, least of all what we now know as comedy. The unheroic element is best understood by anyone who is willing to learn from the variety stage and the music-hall. Now, the music-hall comedian represents humanity as ignorant, philistine, obstinate, dirty, lazy, greedy and lecherous; God forbid that he should do otherwise; he does not show us the average man talking and acting in an average way, but a series of possibilities implicit in familiar situations, a kind of exaggerated concentrate of our lives, a myth which is lovingly adopted by the people whom it represents and is always and inevitably — like more exalted myths — a little out of date. This relation between the comedian's myth and its living subject is the first difficulty that confronts the interpreter of Aristophanes, and Dr Ehrenberg does not face it when he uses *Lysistrata* and *Thesmophoriazusae* as firm evidence for the status of women. In the latter play the women have assembled to condemn Euripides on the grounds that the great wicked women in his tragedies have brought all their sex into disrepute. A relative of Euripides is present at this assembly, disguised as a woman, and in an effort to save the situation he argues that Euripides is justified and recites a vivid catalogue of the everyday misdeeds of women. Surely Dr Ehrenberg is wrong in using an incident in this catalogue (l. 486) to suggest that the average husband was considerate (p. 197), or (p. 206) the speech as a whole to conclude that Aristophanes 'speaks mostly of the bad ways of women' and was opposed to their emancipation. The speech is a concentrated caricature of the ways of women ('My old woman . . .' in the music-hall). What else can the husband in this myth be but considerate? The average Athenian husband appears pretty odious in *Lysistrata*'s bitter words (*Lys.* 507 ff.); and again, what else is possible in the context ('My old man . . .')? A similar failure to do justice to the dramatic context appears in Dr Ehrenberg's use of *Acharnians* 600 (p. 106), *Birds* 18 (p. 223) and 1567 (p. 155), *Clouds* 46ff. (p. 85), *Thesmophoriazusae* 281 (p. 105), and *Wasps* 579 (p. 346).

The facts that we learn from a passage in Comedy rarely, if ever, emerge directly from the statements, general or particular, made by the characters; they come indirectly through an understanding of the tacit assumptions without which the joke is not a joke. The historical use of Comedy appears in this respect remarkably similar to the use of Oratory, which Dr Ehrenberg — wrongly, I think — underrates by comparison. The superficial case against Oratory is easily made. The historian, in his attempts to discover the facts of Attic politics from the orators, easily falls into a comatose naivety which he instantly discards when his trust is solicited by contemporary politicians ('There is no shortage of . . .'), advertisers ('All the best people . . .') and acquaintances ('So I told him . . .'). It would be implausible to say that all plain statements in the orators are false; but it would be a safer assumption than its contrary. The historian ought to discover the facts from the orators indirectly. Admissions which the speaker would have suppressed, if he could, in the interests of his own case may be taken as *prima facie* true. Again, an orator rarely says 'By x I understand . . .', and if

he did we should doubt whether his definition was the normal one; but if he says, in contrasting two people, 'A is x, but B does this and that and that . . .' we can infer what the jury understood by x. Many arguments are patently invalid unless certain assumptions are made. Thus when the speaker of Lysias *On the Murder of Eratosthenes* says 'I thought I heard the front door creak in the night. In the morning I thought I saw traces of make-up on my wife's face, although her brother had died less than a month before. I realize now that she let her lover in during the night' he may not be telling the truth or drawing the right inference, but his argument would make little sense to the jury unless it was abnormal for a woman to put on make-up for at least a month after the death of a near relative.

The historical use of Comedy is not unlike this, but it is far harder. Both the orator and the comic poet may be said to measure what they say by the standard of credibility; but whereas the orator is trying only to persuade us of what happened under the sun to rational beings on two legs, the comic poet is operating at a dozen different levels of the imagination. The tacit assumptions necessary to understand a joke may not be assumptions about real life at all, but assumptions within a field of convention and myth. Dr Ehrenberg seems to make no allowance for this fact at all, unless his remark on the attitude of farmers in Comedy (p. 88n. 4) is meant to point to it. There is the further difference between Oratory and Comedy that in using Oratory we are trying to find out what generally happened from what someone says actually happened; but the comic poet never professes to tell us directly what happened. There are times when the reader of Dr Ehrenberg's book must remind himself vigorously that Comedy is a form of fiction; the slaves' conversation on desertion in *Knights* 21ff. tells us nothing of the incidence of desertion in real life (p. 186), and the wonderful creation of Lysistrata does not in the least mean that 'we may conclude . . . that Kimon's sister Elpinice and the Milesian Aspasia were not the only women in Athens who met men on their own level' (p. 206).

I doubt if there is a page in this book on which all scholars would agree that all the conclusions follow from the evidence referred to; and there are very few pages on which most scholars would not quarrel with at least one of the inferences drawn, especially inferences from fragments of lost plays. If this criticism is even half true, it may seem remarkable that as a description of Attic society the book succeeds. The reason is, I think, that Dr Ehrenberg's conclusions are founded less on the evidence he quotes than on the (often better) evidence that he does not quote; he himself is familiar with *all* the evidence relevant to his enquiry, and he is too good a historian to lose his way in it. The pity is that by elevating the evidence of Comedy to a dominant status he gives himself an indefensible position to hold and misleads the reader on the peculiar difficulties of using Comedy historically. The old dictum that justice should be not only done but openly done has its point for historians.

K. J. DOVER

GEORGE WILLIAMSON: *The Senecan Amble: A Study in Prose Form from Bacon to Collier. Faber and Faber, 42s. net.*

Mr Williamson's subject is an interesting one, and has not before been fully treated in book form. There is, it is true, a series of brilliant articles (shortly to be collected and published by Professor Max Patrick) by Morris Croll, and various other authors, notably R. F. Jones, have contributed to the subject. But a consecutive and comprehensive survey ought to have been of great value, and for that reason the defects of Mr Williamson's book are all the more regrettable. It is curious that several of the writers who have in recent years directed our attention to the importance of the old rhetoric should be so lacking in the qualities which it recommended. There is little *energeia* or *enargeia* in Mr

Williamson's way of writing, and though the reader who perseveres to the end will have learnt a good deal, the journey is unnecessarily jolty, and involves too many halts and shuntings. No doubt almost everything written on the relevant aspects of prose style by all important (and a good many unimportant) seventeenth-century writers is dealt with somewhere in the book, but it is at the price of making it practically unreadable. Not nearly enough trouble has been taken to digest the material. Suppose one wants to know what Mr Williamson has to say about Tyndale. Well, one can trace it from the index: one of the useful things in the book. But it turns out to be in a footnote on Richard Flecknoe. Why? Because Flecknoe happens to refer to our ancestors' plain and simple style. On p. 198 we read that Andrewes's sermons left an *aculeus* behind; not until p. 231 do we get the reference (to Harington) for this saying: the details of the history of Hoskins's *Directions* come on p. 206, though there have been frequent earlier references to the book. Trifles, but all instances of imperfect co-ordination.

It seemed necessary though regrettable to begin by giving examples of some of the defects which, cumulatively, tempt one to decide that this genuinely learned book is, on balance, more of a disservice than a service to English studies. A brief account of the ground covered may now be added. Mr Williamson deals with the rise of anti-Ciceronian prose in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, with the relations between 'schematic' and 'pointed' prose, and, towards the end of the book, with the growth of the new ideals of ease and correctness, largely cutting across the earlier opposition of periodic and brief style, and reintroducing in a modified form certain Ciceronian elements which the earlier part of the century had rejected. The best chapters are 9 and 10, in which Mr Williamson gives a documented refutation of the popular view — apparently going back to Walter Raleigh (Craik's *English Prose Selections*, III. 269-70) —

FRANK SWINNERTON LONDONER'S POST

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that the Royal Society exerted a strong influence on the general development of English prose, and had an official stylistic programme applicable to all kinds of writing. Elsewhere too he usefully corrects and supplements earlier work, as when he points out that the asymmetry which Croll regards as a characteristic of 'baroque' prose is Tacitean rather than Senecan. But one has only to turn from this book to Croll to see the difference between creative and card-index (not, I hasten to add, scissors-and-paste) scholarship. Croll may oversimplify, and generalize beyond the evidence, but he defines the questions he asks, and displays his authors as living men with something to say, and a purpose in saying it the way they did. As Mr Williamson's subjects pass before us (some of them repeating themselves with monotonous frequency) we are sometimes at a loss to know why they ever set pen to paper. Mr Williamson himself probably retains hold of the guiding threads, but he makes it very difficult for his readers to do so.

The standard of accuracy, as far as I can judge, is very high, with a few lapses in Latin and Greek. On pp. 16 and 27, *schematis* should be *schematibus*; on p. 23 *homoioatarckton* is an impossible transliteration; on p. 41 ταπεινός should be translated 'low' not 'mean' to avoid confusion with 'the mean' (τὸ μέτρον) two lines below; on p. 81 *nequiter* is misprinted *nequitur*, on pp. 91-2 *consectatur* (twice) as *confectatur*, on p. 111 *mira* as *more*; on p. 141 *dicentem et audientem* as *dicentum et audientum*; on p. 125 *difficilia quae pulchra* is not original, but already proverbial, in Plato; on pp. 126-7 (twice) *differentia* should be *differentiae*. Other minor points are: it is (p. 162) not just lyric poetry but all *non-imitative* poetry that is 'turned over to philosophy and the arts of language' in Bacon's *De Augmentis Scientiarum*; and on p. 346 a note should point out (the index does, but only if one already knows where to look) that Agellius is Aulus Gellius.

J. C. MAXWELL

W. L. MACDONALD: *Pope and his Critics: A Study in Eighteenth Century Personalities*. Dent, 18s. net.

This work belongs to a class now becoming more frequent — the scholarly monograph on a fairly specialized field of research written and produced in a way which attempts to give it a wider and more popular appeal. It is even more specialized than the main title suggests; for Professor Macdonald is concerned entirely with Pope's eighteenth-century critics, and, more specifically, with the extent to which their criticism is animated by their attitude to Pope's personality. Slender excuse, one might think, for a volume of some bulk. Especially as the main writers — Warburton, Ruffhead, Johnson, Joseph Warton — are not inaccessible, and do not in fact, by the author's own admission (pp. 329-30), write mainly from their reactions to Pope as a man. Nor, in any case, are personal considerations, unhappily, as unusual in the criticism of poets as he suggests (p. 46). However, the real theme of the book, and the source of its value, is not in the specific point which it sets out to prove. It is rather in the accumulation, and orderly presentation, of the evidence of what the eighteenth century thought about its greatest poet. Necessarily, in his life-time, all kinds of particular interests and animosities were brought into play. After his death, the labours of Warburton, the great life by Johnson, the disappointing biography of Ruffhead, play an important part in the swelling chorus of praise. Warton, of course, is a dissident, but, as Professor Macdonald clearly shows, he did not fully succeed in defining his attitude to Pope, or to the literature of his age. His reserves about Pope's poetry are to be interpreted as the result of a more general malaise.

It is a useful and interesting survey, and many minor works on Pope, some of them interesting, have been discovered by Professor Macdonald. One wonders, however, whether the attempt to bring his work to a wider public than such a

study normally commands, is likely to succeed; if not, it is a pity that an impractical aim should have interfered with the fullness of presentation and explanation which the specialist may expect, but which is here omitted in the interests of general readability.

IAN WATT

C. V. WEDGWOOD: *The Last of the Radicals*. Cape, 16s. net.

Few political figures are lucky enough to find a skilful and sympathetic biographer close at hand within the family circle, but perhaps Lord Wedgwood as the originator of the great plan for a History of Parliament deserves his good fortune. Miss Wedgwood has decided not to plunge too deeply into the problems of contemporary history, although she includes a good deal of interesting political material, mainly in the form of extracts from letters. She has preferred to write what is primarily a personal sketch, in which only the outlines of political change are traced. It is doubtful whether a fuller treatment would have been worth while, for Wedgwood was essentially a simple man, and always too much of an individualist to be representative of his times. He stoutly defended many causes that were dying in his day — the Single Tax, the rights of the backbench M.P., the Whig interpretation of history — and some others that have since won through to success, such as Zionism and Indian independence. Miss Wedgwood's book gathers interest in the later years, for the tragedy of his marriage and the failure of his political ambitions softened the more strident tones of his character. Before 1914, as the scion of a wealthy industrialist who had taken up Liberal politics, Wedgwood seemed to be one of many in a Commons dominated by the Edwardian plutocracy; as the 'last of the Radicals' between the wars, so much out of harmony even with the Labour Party to which he now belonged, he gained stature. He stood for traditions which Parliament can ill afford to do without, but which the modern party system seems to be too inflexible to allow.

H. M. PELLING

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MARJORIE BRIERLEY: *Trends in Psycho-Analysis*. Hogarth Press, 21s. net.

Objectivity is all very well; but there is no need to overdo it in a review of a *more or less* philosophical compilation. That is one possible description of this book. The disappointment one feels is due to an impression that the author could have done better, rather than that she has not done well. The principal facts are that the book is based on a series of papers (1934-47), partly dealing with the fairly recent history of psycho-analytical theory, but more especially concerned with the positive contribution of that theory to 'our understanding of human nature and the conduct of life'. To match oneself with such a theme is to invite comparison with genius. There is, indeed, no reason why an author should not attempt this 'high jump'; but, bearing in mind that there is nothing new to be said about it, but only new ways of saying it, the venture should be undertaken boldly, provocatively, and, if not humourously, at least with a sense of humour. If it be learned and scholarly too, so much the better.

These are personal yardsticks, which not everyone will accept. Deficiencies in these dimensions could, from other points of view, be seen as assets. For example, it is obvious that Dr Brierley is very well read, in a circumscribed way; it is obvious because the reader stumbles over a quotation or a reference in practically every paragraph. In the earlier part of the book, which deals with the technicalities of psycho-analytical theory, this is as it should be. The result is a fairly concise survey of the state of thought in this field. It will be interesting and useful to those who already know a good deal about psycho-analysis, but to others it is likely to be largely unintelligible. In other words, it is a survey from the inside, rather than a bird's eye view. Indeed, the sin of standing too close to her subject besets the author throughout the book, and occasionally makes her forget her sense of humour. Thus she says, '... we have learnt something very important about the hitherto unexplored ego, namely, that ... self-love exists side by side with object-love'. It is not that the statement is an empty one; it has the most profound and extensive implications; but these are not mentioned. Dr Brierley may have meant: 'We have arrived, by our special methods, at something we already knew to be true, which tends to validate our mode of reasoning.' That would be perfectly proper, and in such cases mathematicians employ the very useful saving clause: 'as is otherwise obvious'.

The tactic of advancing behind a creeping barrage of references is the normal practice in scientific papers. But when we come to Dr Brierley's later chapters, which embody her general philosophy of life, it is merely distracting. This is a pity, because what she has to say will be of great interest to many readers. One wonders, however, how they will react to passages like this: '... there has always been agreement amongst Christians of truest insight that the essential ethic of Christianity is an ethic of love. Modern Christians are becoming increasingly alive to this fact; it is, for example, the corner-stone of Albert Schweitzer's thinking.' Surely, if authority were needed for such an elementary statement, the New Testament would be the standard reference.

It is in these ways — matters largely of form and style — that the author fails to do herself justice. Unfortunately, in so failing, she makes it difficult for the reviewer to do her justice either. It is so easy to pick out oddities, affectations, pedestrianisms, and the like — and so difficult to exemplify the solid good sense which, nevertheless, is really there. On the whole, it is not very profound sense, but then not everybody wants or can digest profundity. Moreover, it is overlaid with a distinctly partisan comparison of psycho-analysis with Christianity; for instance: 'Infant science though psycho-analysis may be, the orientation it affords is not the blind submission of the "good child" to the inscrutable Will of God, but adult acceptance of responsible living in accord with the insight so far attained into the natural laws of personal life.' This sounds very fine, but even the author has a suspicion that the difference is only one of degree, not of

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kind. Submission to an inscrutable and inflexible will is psychologically identical with acceptance of natural laws, which are ultimately no less inscrutable, and are inflexible by definition. One illusion may work better than another, if it turns out to mirror more faithfully the particular bit of 'reality' experienced by its possessor; but if there is a choice, it is between illusions, not between illusion and truth. What Dr Brierley urges is that the religious illusion is not necessary, since '... inspiration for living is given to every human being in his very instincts'. Well said; but in so far as the instincts are responsible for this work, they do it by — to misquote — secreting illusions 'as the liver secretes bile'; and religion is one of their products — one of their 'inspirations'. In addition, there is a confusion between Religion and particular religions, and it is hardly resolved by the author continually referring to Christianity as if it were necessarily that caricature that we have come to associate with the Victorian middle-class.

The inescapable fact is that religion, or something equivalent, has resisted all the attacks of rationalism — and they are no stronger now than they have always been. It remains impregnable because man, oppressed with foreknowledge, must have his leucotomy, one way or another — his deliverance from too full a consciousness of 'the wheel and the drift of things'.

W. E. HICK

G. D. H. COLE: *The British Co-operative Movement in a Socialist Society*. Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d. net.

In this report prepared for the Fabian Society, Professor Cole postulates a considerable extension of public ownership by a succession of Labour governments, and then endeavours to examine what part the co-operative movement could play in the new pattern of society. The problem is a real one, for the co-operative leaders have already been expressing their uneasiness about the nationalization proposals of the Labour Party. Professor Cole is critical of many features of the present-day co-operative organization, but he maintains that its ideal is worth preserving and that it must not be submerged in the process of nationalization. In the distributive industries he advocates the establishment of 'mutual' societies — a new type of co-operative sponsored by the state and competing with the existing co-operative societies. In the producing industries, nearly all the existing co-operative interests lie outside what the author regards as the sphere of potential nationalization. Considered as an interim report designed to provoke further discussion, Professor Cole's work is brilliantly done, and is all the more valuable for having been done as a personal and independent study.

H. M. PELLING

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